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In order to test whether certain structures characteristic of West African languages are also present in the Negro English dialect of Natchitoches Parich, Louisiana, 355 short autobiographical papers written by Negro high school students were analyzed. Another 355 papers written by white high school students were used as controls. The papers were analyzed following an outline of expected non-standard structures adapted from Turner's "Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect." Results seemd to indicate that there is a definite African substructure in this Negro dialect which is both masked and reinforced by a survival of certain archaic forms, the simplifications of the pidgin English first used by the slaves, and normal simplifications of language found in any "folk speech." The study showed that 95 percent of the Negro students were affected by these factors as compared to 58 percent of the white students. It was also suggested that Negro dialects may have had a perceptible influence on the structure of white southern dialects. In discussing the teaching of standard English to non-standard dialect speakers, it is proposed that: (1) teachers receive training in linguistics, (2) recognition and respect be given to Negro and other dialects, (3) both linguistics and literature courses be used to teach awareness of standard usage, (4) a writing approach to English teaching be investigated. (JD)

STRUCTURAL FEATURES OF NEGRO ENGLISH
IN NATCHITOCHES PARISH

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by Ursula Genung Walker

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AL 001 504

CONTENTS

Chapter I: The Special Problems of the Negro Student . . . 1

Chapter II: Africanisms in the Structure 25

Chapter III: Levels and Learning 53

Chapter IV: A Challenge and an Opportunity for Northwestern State College 83

Footnotes 90

Bibliography 98

Appendix 102

Acknowledgements 110

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STRUCTURAL FEATURES OF NEGRO ENGLISH
IN NATCHITOCHES PARISH

A Thesis submitted to

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MASTER OF ARTS

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CHAPTER I

SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF THE NEGRO STUDENT

Eleven years after the Supreme Court decision directing the desegregation of schools in the United States, the first Negro students were admitted to Northwestern State College; there were fourteen of them. Two years later, in the fall of 1967, there were four hundred ninety three colored students on the rolls of the College for the regular fall session.[1] This number was a little less than ten percent of the total student body; projections into the future indicate that within ten years an enrollment at least half Negro is not unlikely.

As the number of colored students has increased, the English teacher in the college has become conscious of a new dimension to his perennial problem of trying to inculcate a little style and grace--or at least a degree of coherence--into the speech, and more particularly into the writing, of students in whose language non-standard forms abound. For the colored teachers in the area's elementary and high schools there has arisen a new problem, also: how better to prepare their students to compete linguistically in the formerly all-white colleges which more and more of them will be attending.

How is the language of these colored students different? Why is it different? And what can be done to enable them to acquire that standard English which is a tool vital to them if they are to compete, not merely in the colleges, but also in the business and professional world?

These are questions whose importance is not limited to the confines of Natchitoches Parish nor to the academic purlieus of Northwestern State College. Outmigrations of Southern Negroes into the nation's great cities have made the problem of teaching standard speech to the culturally deprived a pressing one for New York, Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, Los Angeles--to name only a few of the metropolises where this item is at the top of the eleemosynary agenda. The National Council of Teachers of English has formed a task force on teaching English to the disadvantaged, and is producing numerous publications on the subject. The Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C., is also actively engaged in research on this topic, and its Urban Language Series and Language Information Series are resources for students in the field. Louisiana State University at New Orleans has established a Language Arts Center to study and work with the problem and is urging local school boards to follow suit.[2] Every program, every agency concerned with the disadvantaged finds itself, and usually sooner rather than later, confronted by the problem of language.

However, the complexities of that problem can be worked out in any community only after an investigation of the situation in that particular community: its background as well as its present characteristics. The background of the problem in Natchitoches Parish can perhaps best be given by reviewing the history of Negro education in both state and Parish.

The first Negro slaves were brought to Louisiana perhaps as early as 1712.[3] It was more than a hundred years later that their education first became a matter for legislative attention, and that attention was negative in the extreme: the state lawgivers in 1830 made it a prison offense (not less than one month nor more than twelve) to "teach, or permit or cause to be taught" any slave to read or write.[4]

The settlement which grew to become the City of Natchitoches was established around 1714, and almost from the first, in the Natchitoches area, there were free people of color, on whom substantial holdings of arable land had been settled by their former French masters. Some of these mulatto people, of whom Lyle Saxon wrote in Children of Strangers, had extensive plantations along the Côte Joyeux of what is now known as Cane River, and were presumably among those taxed when the first free public schools were organized in 1841 and supported by a tax on all property owners; but all Negroes, even free people of color, were banned from such public schools as then existed.[5]

It was 1915 before fifty percent of the state's Negroes were enrolled in school.[6] In Natchitoches Parish it was 1925 before the average daily attendance of Negro children reached fifty percent; in that year there were only 2,993 Negroes enrolled in the public schools,[7] though there were in the neighborhood of 5,000 colored children of school age living in the Parish.[8]

In 1930 the Louisiana educational expenditure per child of school age was $40.64 for the white, $7.84 for the colored child.[9]

Soon afterward the provision by the state of free school books gave a decided impetus to school attendance, for the poor white as for the Negro. Shoes and clothing were another lack; even in 1958 the (white) Visiting Teacher in a poor rural parish bordering Natchitoches was spending much of her time begging clothing for colored children to enable them to go to school.

In 1937 Natchitoches Parish had 67 colored schools: one- and two-room schools, many in churches. By 1955 the number of schools was down (there are only nine today), but the number enrolled was up to 4,324, while daily attendance, for the first time, approximated ninety percent of the colored educables.[10]

As late as 1957, the calendars of certain of the rural colored schools were still arranged so as to release the children during cotton picking time; the lost days were "made up" on Saturdays and during the Christmas season. By 1966, when the first colored children began attending white schools in the Parish, there were 4,384 colored school children with an average daily attendance of ninety-four percent.[11] There is no estimate as to how many of these were in only the second generation of literacy; nor, indeed, as to how many were in the first.

The state itself, to be sure, ranked "dead last among the fifty states" in its literacy level as recently as 1965.[12] To the low educational standards of the state Natchitoches Parish, located in the northern and poorer tier of parishes, has made its contribution. The Parish, which is largely rural, is not affluent. Its income from agriculture, estimated at $7,532,000 in 1964,[13] has been surpassed by the annual budget of the Parish's formerly second greatest economic asset, Northwestern State College, which is requesting a legislative appropriation of $7,605,789 for 1968-69.[14] The Parish school system ($4,469,622 in 1967-68)[15] and Welfare (about $3,500,000 in grants in 1967)[16] are the other principal economic props. More than one person in every seven--5,539 of the population of 35,653 in 1960--receives public assistance. Forty-three percent of the Parish population is Negro.[17]

Poverty and low educational standards go hand in hand, and each causes the other. Yet, some progress is being made. The median income in the Parish in 1950 was $1,159, compared to $2,122 in the state. In 1960 the comparable figures were $2,382 and $4,272: a 105% Parish gain compared to a state gain of 101%. In 1940, 46.5% of the adults (over 25) had less than five years' schooling; in 1960 the figure was down to 32.6%, while in the same period the percentage of those who had completed high school nearly doubled, from 12.7 to 25.3. Still, in the ten years from 1950 to 1960, median school years increased only from 5.9 to 7.4.

There is a small Negro middle class, including a handful of planters, a few businessmen, and the numerous teachers who, in recent years, have been paid on the same scale as the Parish's white teachers. But the great majority of the Parish's colored people have lived for generations in conditions of deep poverty and of almost complete cultural isolation. The finger of wonder may properly be pointed not at their poor command of the language, but at the fact that, under such circumstances, so many have mastered the standard dialect, while the rest have learned to speak and to write English not less well than many of the poor whites who are also a large element of the Parish population.

Now the barriers which imposed that cultural isolation are beginning to fall. They will be generations in disappearing. The really grave problems of communication between the races cannot be undertaken--cannot even be approached--in a work of this sort; and yet it is perhaps fitting to call attention to them. Sociologist Ernest A. T. Barth has a relevant warning on this subject:

> To the extent that academic performance is also a product of linguistic differences, if there is failure to understand the teacher because of these linguistic barriers to communication, then the provision of "equal educational opportunities for minority children" would seem to be a far more difficult task than it has thus far been considered. It will involve far more than a simple equating of physical facilities and a mechanical social integration in the classroom. Far more attention will have to be directed to the problem of facilitating effective interpersonal communication.
>
> There is a second implication in this approach to the study of Negro-white relations. It may be helpful in advancing our understanding of cliquing behavior in certain types of situations. Repeated notice has been made of the fact that Negroes and whites tend to form racially segregated cliques in settings relatively free of the more obvious forms of racial prejudice and where participants in the situations are actively interested in promoting more friendly relations. Examples of such behavior have been observed in integrated housing developments, churches, and among the student bodies of integrated schools. It seems likely that the type of linguistic barriers to effective communication here discussed could produce feelings of uneasiness and frustration for both Negroes and whites when they interact. Because they appear to share a common language, members of both groups tend to explain that the social strains they experience in interaction are a result of racial differences--"they're just different from us." This leads to a withdrawal into racial cliques.[19]

"They *appear* to share a common language," Barth has said. Whether Negroes and whites in the United States actually do share a common language, even in the more superficial aspects of that language; and, if so, to what extent, was never brought into question until the present century. Negro speech, long the darling of the *litterateurs* because of its rich phonemic and structural divagations from the standard American forms, had little scholarly attention before the work of James A. Harrison in 1884.[20] As Allen Walker Read wrote in 1939, "The records of Negro speech are to be found chiefly in dialect fiction, much of it fantastically inaccurate."[21]

When the almost impossible question was asked, it was usually answered with a strong affirmative. "The Negroes, indeed, in acquiring English have done their work so thoroughly that they have retained not a trace of any African speech," said George Philip Krapp in 1924. "Neither have they transferred anything of importance from their native tongues to the general language. . . .Generalizations are always dangerous, but it is reasonably safe to say that not a single detail of Negro pronunciation or of Negro syntax can be proved to have any other than an English origin."[22]

Cleanth Brooks, in a work which was published by the Louisiana State University Press in 1935, and which must occasionally rise to haunt him, declared: "In almost every case, the specifically Negro forms turn out to be older English forms which the Negro must have taken originally from the white man, and which he has retained after the white man has begun to lose them. . . .For the purpose of this study the speech of the Negro and of the white will be considered as one."[23] It might be noted that Brooks apparently used no Negro informants, relying on the works of Joel Chandler Harris for Negro speech; he is not the only scholar who has used literary sources in this way and thus observed the dialect in vitro, rather than in vivo. The approach is reminiscent of the Chinese ladies of long ago who took tiny female figurines when they went to see the doctor, in order to be able, without disrobing, to point to the place that hurt.

The Linguistic Atlas, as it penetrates into the Deep South, is also shy of Negro sources. Gordon Wood says, in an article entitled "Atlas Survey of the Interior South (U.S.A.)," that of 2,000 informants, none was Negro or Indian.[24] Mary Lucile Pierce Folk, in her "Word Atlas of North Louisiana" (1961), states in her prefatory abstract that the purpose of her investigation was to study the vocabulary of the white people of North Louisiana.[25]

Hans Kurath, founder and first director of the Atlas, is another who affirms that the Negro and white languages are the same. "By and large," he says in A Word Geography of the Eastern United States (1949), "the Southern Negro speaks the language of the white man of his locality or area and of his level of education. But in some respects his speech is more archaic and old-fashioned; not un-English, but retarded because of less schooling. As far as the speech of uneducated Negroes is concerned, it differs little from that of the illiterate white; that is, it exhibits the same regional and local variations as that of the simple white folk."[26] Kurath still holds this point of view, according to one of his students.[27]

Indications that there might be another concept of the Negro dialect began appearing in the literature at least as early as 1933, when the late C. M. Wise of Louisiana State University noted certain structural differences between Negro English and the standard variety. He also wrote that the vocal quality of Negro speech might well be the result of a tongue position inherited from the original African speech.[28]

Over in another corner of the world the Negro scholar Lorenzo Dow Turner had already embarked on the years of study of the African languages which were to bear such interesting fruit. His mind and that of the anthropologist Melville J. Herskovits were running in the same channels; in 1935 Herskovits wrote: "The curious turns of phrase in Negro-French. . .can clearly be shown to have resulted from a process of placing European words in an African grammatical frame. . . . Whether in French, in Spanish, or in English, the turns of phrase employed by Negroes are the same."[29]

Not long afterward a member of the Speech Department at Brigham Young University in Utah appeared on the campus at L.S.U. as a candidate for the Ph.D. His reason for the long journey was simply that he wanted to study the Negro dialect, and thought Louisiana the best place for such an undertaking. The result was a monumental dissertation in which he not only quoted extensively from many authors, both white and colored, who had attempted to reproduce the Negro dialect, but also established a precedent by making phonograph records of the speech of live Negro informants and making careful phonetic transcriptions of these--not to mention including a sixty-nine page vocabulary of Negro English with phonetic spellings![30]

In addition, Pardoe went to some trouble to familiarize himself with the phonetics and structure of African languages. (He was, incidentally, familiar with the work Turner was doing.) He contended strongly--as Turner was later to do--that phonetically Negro speech reflected the African heritage; he suggested in a somewhat guarded way that African grammatical structures persisted in Negro English; he even went so far as to suggest that Negro speech had influenced white speech. Excerpts follow:

> This thesis reveals that the Negro did more than assimilate the errors and variants of the early British dialects, that he is more than an important repository of British speech evolutions: he definitely used his own native language equipment and adapted the corrupt English taught him to fit his own phonetic concepts. . . .
>
> We may reasonably become convinced that the speech of the Southern Negro has been greatly conditioned by native language forms, and that the Negro's social isolation has contributed to his preserving of the forms of speech which he first used in America. . . .
>
> In presenting the variants of Negro-English dialects, we may safely conclude that they are the result of teachings from British overseers and American masters, who reflected the many types of speech divergencies of the slave-trading eras, combined with native African elements, phonetic and grammatical.[31]

After defending his thesis (and Pardoe says today that he was forced to defend it quite vigorously, in view of the commitment of the University's scholars to the view of Cleanth Brooks), he went quietly back to Utah to head the Speech Department at Brigham Young University, and the dissertation, a mine of information, sank unpublished beneath the waters of the sea of scholarship.

In 1941 we find Herskovits again, in The Myth of the Negro Past, contending that Negroes were not unlike people of other nationalities in their struggles with the English language:

> The Sudanic languages of West Africa, despite their mutual unintelligibility and apparent variety of form, are fundamentally similar in those traits which linguists employ in classifying dialects, as is to be discerned when the not inconsiderable number of published grammars of native languages spoken throughout the area from which the slaves were taken, are compared. This being the case, and since grammar and idiom are the last aspects of a new language to be learned, the Negroes who reached the New World acquired as much of the vocabulary of their masters as they initially needed or was later taught to them, pronounced these words as best they were able, but organized them into their aboriginal speech patterns. . . .This emphatically does not imply that these dialects are without grammar, or that they represent an inability to master the foreign tongue, as is so often claimed. If this hypothesis is true, certain results should follow when these modes of speech are analyzed. In the first place, Negro linguistic expression should everywhere manifest greater resemblance in structure and idiom than could be accounted for by chance. Deviations from the usages of European languages, furthermore, should all take the same direction, though the amount of deviation from accepted usage should be expected to vary with the degree of acculturation experience by a given group. Finally, not only should these deviations be in the same direction, but they should be in accord with the conventions that mark the underlying patterns of West African languages.[32]

Indeed, hints about structural dissimilarities between Negro English and white English, and structural similarities between Negro English and the languages of Africa, seemed to come from almost every source except the linguists. Even Marguerite and Lewis Herman, whose useful Manual of American Dialects for Radio, Stage, Screen and Television was published in 1947, state that rather than simply reflecting white Colonial speech forms, the Negro may have made a major contribution to the general Southern dialect. The authors mention the tendency to use present tense forms in constructions calling for the past tense; the tendency to use the third person singular form for the first person singular; the omission of auxiliary verbs; and general "confusion" of prepositions, among other things.[33]

In another two years Turner's book Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect, finally appeared. For the first time, in addition to the phonetic resemblances, the syntactical and morphological similarities between certain African languages and a Negro dialect were systematically considered.[34] Perhaps because his study was devoted to the fascinating Gullah, which itself sounds like a foreign language, few students of dialect seem to have perceived the connection between Turner's work and the more familiar Negro speech. Yet it was at the time his book appeared that Negro speech ways began to emerge as a matter for serious concern.

With technological developments coming, after World War II, faster than they could be assimilated, the United States suddenly looked around and found itself in an era which had no work for hewers of wood and drawers of water. Jobs requiring highly skilled men were proliferating--and were going begging. The schools, already staggering under their private population explosion, were being called upon to train students for jobs that did not exist: and such students must be the most literate of all.

To aggravate the situation, angry rumbles began coming from those many whose educations had fitted them only to be the hewers of wood and the drawers of water. At the same time, the American Negro, backed by Civil Rights legislation, was knocking at every door; and there were three rather alarmed realizations in connection with this demand by the black man for a larger role in American society. One was that it was no longer enough for the Negro to be able to understand such phrases as "tote that barge" and "lift that bale." Another was that his help is needed if the machine is to be kept running. As for the third, it was that not only did the black man not have the linguistic equipment that he needed (and was needed to have), but also that no one knew how to give it to him.

The new era in Negro dialect studies opened in 1951 with an article by Raven Ioor McDavid, Jr., and his wife, Virginia Glenn McDavid (both long associated with the Linguistic Atlas), titled "The Relationship of the Speech of American Negroes to the Speech of American Whites." Taking cognizance of Turner's significant work, and pointing out that "vocabulary and phonology are not matters of skin pigmentation but of the social contacts and economic opportunities of the informant," they outlined new studies of the Negro dialect that needed (many of which still need) to be done. On the side of a persistence of African forms in Negro English, the McDavids observed: "Moreover, the comparative work in African languages has revealed a high degree of structural similarity between the languages of the area from which most of the slaves were taken, so as to make for common trends in the speech of American Negroes, regardless of the mutual unintelligibility of their original languages."[35]

McDavid, once at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, later at Cornell, is now at the University of Chicago and remains the concerned, witty, and wise dean of the dialectologists. Other names are gradually becoming familiar in the field of dialectology: William Labov of Columbia University, Einar Haugen of Harvard, Robert A. Hall of Cornell, Roger W. Shuy and William A. Stewart of the Center for Applied Linguistics, Beryl Bailey of Hunter College, Lee A. Pederson of Emory University, Walter Loban of the University of California, Charlotte K. Brooks of the District of Columbia Public Schools, Juanita Williamson of LeMoyne College, San-su Lin of Southern University.

Another voice sometimes heard is that of Douglas Taylor, currently associated with the Department of Anthropology at George Washington University. His explanation of the development, not only of Negro English--or Negro American--but of all the Negro creole languages, is a particularly lucid one:

> At first "pidgins" or jargons employed only between African and European, and between Africans of different provenance, all of them later became "creolized"--adopted, that is to say, as the first and in general only language of whole communities; and with the exception of Negro Dutch (formerly spoken in the Virgin Islands, but probably now extinct), they remain that to this day. These languages are peculiar in combining rather similar grammatical structures of a non-Indo-European and seemingly West African type with vocabularies that are preponderantly of English, Portugese or Spanish, Dutch and French ancestries respectively. . . . All creoles are therefore "regular" languages in that each has its own pattern of distinctive units of sound, its own grammatical signs and conventions, and a vocabulary adequate for the cultural demands of its native speakers. Moreover, such languages evolve, once creolization has taken place, in much

> the same ways as do other idioms, and in accordance with their native speakers' changing needs of communication. *But they differ from languages with a longer tradition in having basic grammars whose source cannot clearly be identified with that of their basic vocabularies*, and in being comparatively free of such fossilized historical debris as result in our own irregular noun plurals and verbal conjugations.[36]

Few linguists were reading work of this sort or taking Turner's hint. Hall came close in his book *Pidgin and Creole Languages* (1966), in which he states that "even the nineteenth-century stage of Negro speech. . .shows a good many structural features characteristic of creoles, such as. . .the use of a simple uninflected verb in all persons." However, he later says that what he calls the "American Negro Creole English" has largely disappeared through assimilation.[37]

There are other scholars who have not yet "got the message" which was so clearly set down by Turner: W. Nelson Francis, for example, who writes (in *The Structure of American English*, 1958) that of the many dialects to be found in any language, all share "a common core of structure."[38] This sounds reasonable; but the essence of Turner's message is simply that users of Negro English and users of Standard English do *not* share a common core of structure: that they are not speaking quite the same language.

If this is true, it is of the utmost importance to the teacher who is trying to instill Standard English in those members of the Negro race who do not already command that dialect, for it means that the problem cannot be approached item by item: it can be approached only in terms of a different structural *system*. It means, moreover, that teachers, both white and colored, must realize that they are dealing, not with the fruits simply of poverty and isolation, but with the remnants of a language system acquired by these children and young people, through a long process of cultural transmission, from the homeland of their forebears.

In order to investigate the hypothesis that standard English and the Negro dialect are structurally different, and that this difference came about because of the Negro's continued use of those structural features which so many African languages have in common, an analysis of the use of the language by colored students, in terms of the structural elements mentioned in Turner's book, was planned as the core of this thesis. Toward this end, the cooperation of the Natchitoches Parish school system was obtained in securing brief autobiographies, written in class, of 355 colored juniors and seniors attending Parish schools, and including thirteen Negro juniors and seniors now enrolled in formerly all-white schools. The papers written by these students formed the corpus of the dialect study presented in Chapter II.

A linguistic study based on written material is so almost radical in the present era that some justification of this procedure may seem in order. Speech, of course, followed on the heels of the grunt and the gesture. Written language came later, perhaps by a millennium or so. It rendered communication permanent and portable, and freed it from the limitations of proximity and other acoustical considerations. The lexicon and the structure of speech and of the written language are similar, but this fact does not seem wholly to justify repeated statements by some linguists to the effect that "writing was devised to represent the sounds of speech" (Paul Roberts, who might be hard put to apply this dictum to the written Chinese);[39] or that "only speech is language" (Trager and Smith, cited by Gleason);[40] or that "writing is not language and language is not writing" (W. Nelson Francis).[41]

Millions upon millions of words which have appeared in letters and manuscripts and in print have never been spoken or even "thought aloud" by either writer or reader. The detachment of the written word from phonology (which, in the case of English, verges on the sublime) has often been the subject of comment. Spelling reform, probably fortunately, founders again and again on the problem of having to represent such a simple word as "the" in such diverse ways as /ðə/, /ðɪ/, /ði/, and occasionally /ðʌ/, not to mention the Brooklynite's /də/, the Frenchman's /dʒɪ/ or /dʒi/ and other variations which are clear enough to the ear but could be baffling to the eye. To call writing "graphemics," as is sometimes done, emphasizes the theory that our letters are the representations of sound, and so they are, in a way; but of what sound is the "e" in "the" representative? It is obvious that the written and spoken language can hardly be said to share the same lexicon on a one-to-one basis, and the same is true of structure.

A water color and a painting of the same mountain scene share the blue of the sky, the white of the snow, the green of the trees and the triangular shape of the peak, but they are executed in two very different media. Shall we say that only the painting, or only the water color, is art? Speech is even more nearly comparable to a color photograph of the mountain taken with a box camera that has only to be pointed and a button pushed: all the technique is stored in the box, as all the technique of speech is stored in that wonderful computer housed inside the human skull. Until it becomes oratory, speech does not require the conscious skills which are needed for writing as they are needed for painting. Writing, like speech, is a device, a medium, for communicating information and ideas and states of mind; it does not by any means simply represent speech as notes on a staff represent music.

Furthermore, any reasonably avid reader of a morning newspaper has, by the time he finishes his second cup of coffee, ingested more words in printed form than he will speak or hear spoken all day and perhaps all week unless he is a school teacher, a carnival barker, a tourist guide, a U. N. interpreter (in session) or a steady auditor of one of these. He himself may write, or read, or do both, well or ill: what is much to the point of these considerations is that he may be a miserable speaker and yet write with the pen of an angel. When people address themselves to putting words on paper, they are all, to a greater or less degree, writing a language other than the one they speak.

Roberts, despite his statement giving primacy to speech, puts the transformationalists squarely behind a different view, saying that they deny "that the morphology and syntax must be built on a prior description of the sound structure. They would rather begin, in the traditional way, with the syntax. There are many theoretical reasons for this preference and one powerful practical argument: after decades of effort, structural linguistics has produced rather thorough descriptions of English sounds and extensive inventories of morphemes but very little in syntax. It is at least a plausible hypothesis that this failure reflects a weakness in the theory itself."[42]

But it is H. A. Gleason, Jr., who, in his valuable book _Linguistics and English Grammar_, most tellingly puts speech in its place, in part by very effectively pointing out wherein writing has its equivalents of the paralanguage of gesture, pitch, tone, juncture and so on. As for shared structure, "Written English has its own grammar,"[43] he says.

Psychologists Milton W. Horowitz and John B. Newman, in a comparative analysis of spoken and written expression, have found that "Spoken expression produces more material, more ideas, more signals. Spoken expression is more repetitious and more elaborative in all aspects of analysis. These differences between the two modes are related to the facility of utterance both biologically and psychologically. The psychological factors include inhibition, deliberateness, memory for what is said, and a drive to prevent silent intervals."[44] Speech also has an uninhibiting factor in that it does not usually become a permanent record which might later call the utterer to account.

The written language has a number of qualities which lend themselves particularly to a study of this kind. For one thing, writing lies still under the dissecting knife, by night as by day. No damage is done to living tissue; nor is there any distorting effect through what Erving Goffman has called "the neglected situation." Goffman points out that just as age, sex, class, country of origin, schooling, and so on, are social variables which have an effect on speech, so also is the situation in which the speakers find themselves.[45] The situation in which a white observer finds himself attempting to investigate black speech is one which must almost always distort results; indeed, McDavid has stated that it is difficult even for Negro investigators to win the confidence of colored informants.[46] Since the papers used in this study were written by the children in their regular classroom environment, this complication was obviated. Also, use of written material, simpler to obtain and to handle, made it possible to use a much larger group of informants. More importantly, written material shows a greater conformity to a more nearly universal pattern. As Gleason has said, "It is one of the very significant features of all written languages that they tend to be relatively uniform over areas within which speech varies appreciably."[47] This seemed a marked advantage, since one of the objectives of the study was to observe how nearly the subjects would approach Standard American English under the most favorable circumstances possible. It is axiomatic that everyone is on his best linguistic behavior when writing. Thus it seemed that if putative Africanisms emerged in the students' writing, this must be the case much more frequently in their speech.

Most compelling of all was the fact that writing is especially well adapted to the study of structure, a primary purpose of this paper. A writing approach also has promise for future work with these young people; as I. Morris has remarked, "The development of modern linguistics has had a profound effect on the study and teaching of English grammar. The new approaches, with their emphasis on speech, would appear to call for a drastic switch from the written to the spoken language. Provided the treatment is on sound linguistic lines, concentration on the written language, beyond the establishment of the grammatical system, is perfectly valid and may still better serve the needs and interests of the general (non-specialist) student."[48] This suggestion seems particularly applicable in the South, where the very great majority of the colored students in the elementary and high schools are taught by colored teachers most of whom share the not unattractive phonology of their students. It would be as ridiculous as it would be unrealistic to expect these thousands of teachers and pupils to change their phonological speech patterns, for such a change would not only divide them from the other members of their own race, but would also make their speech strange to white Southerners so many of whom share that same phonology to some degree. Further, it is the colored students' use of the written language for which they are most often penalized in institutions of higher learning; it is here that they particularly need the protective cover of conformity.

To return, then, to the papers which formed the basis for the present dialect study, the instructions below were, through the Parish Superintendent and the Jeanes Supervisors, furnished to the teachers of junior and senior English classes in the Parish schools:

> HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS AND SENIORS 1967-68
>
> During the next 15 minutes of class, write the story of your life from the day you were born until today.
>
> Tell something about your parents.
> Tell when and where you were born.
> Tell about your brothers and sisters.
> Tell about your school.
> Tell what you do in the summer.
> Tell what you like to do most of all--and what you don't like.
> Tell what you plan to do when you get out of high school.
> Tell what you want to do when you are grown.
>
> Write just as much as you can before the time is up. If you need more time ask your teacher to extend the time. Write as if you were writing a letter to your best friend. Don't worry about spelling and punctuation and rules of grammar; mistakes won't count against you. Just write and have fun doing it. (Start by putting your name at the top of the page.)

The autobiography was chosen as the form of the papers because almost all students have enough information about and interest in themselves to write a paper of reasonable length on this subject. The fifteen-minute time limit was suggested not so much to curtail the length of the compositions (since most students of this age will write about as much in a quarter of an hour as in an hour, and at least half have usually exhausted their literary endurance at the end of ten minutes), as to limit the imposition on the time of the cooperating teachers.

The instructions concerning spelling, punctuation, grammar, and the use of slang were designed to provide a relaxed atmosphere, and as a test of whether there was a variance in racial attitudes towards informal writing. It might be said here that spelling and punctuation were not considered in the analysis of the papers.

Complete details of the linguistic tabulations kept will be given in the following chapter. Several tabulations of no linguistic relevance were kept, one of which indicated that on the whole the colored students' handwriting is of about the same overall quality as the handwriting of the white students.

The colored students wrote roughly 563 pages, the white students roughly 555, a variance of .014 percent.

There were 2,265 children in the families of the colored students who reported this information; the white students' families had 1,397 children. The average number of children per family was thus 6.8 for the colored and 4.31 for the white. The thirteen colored juniors and seniors attending white schools reported a total of fifty-four children in their families, for an average of 4.15 children per family. Only one student, a colored boy, said that he planned to become president.

With the results of the dialect study in hand, two aspects of the problem remained to be considered. One was the importance of language levels: their effects on communication, education, employment, and status. The second was the question of teaching approaches: what has been done, what can be done, what ought to be done, and what must be done if those colored children who use a non-standard dialect are to be helped to take responsible places in a society one of whose more commendable aims is the elimination of the lower class.

Based on the material covered in this thesis, Northwestern State College has the opportunity of setting up, in cooperation with area schools, a program for language teaching for the disadvantaged Negro student which will form a pattern for other schools across the nation, and particularly in the South.

CHAPTER II

AFRICANISMS IN THE STRUCTURE

Natchitoches Parish has more French blood in its heritage than most of North Louisiana, and perhaps for that reason the old French game of bourre (/bur/ in France, but /'bu re/ in Louisiana) is popular with many of its card players. In order to explain the hypothesis upon which the core of this study is based, we might posit a group of bourre players who suddenly found themselves transported to a strange country inhabited by poker players who wanted nothing to do--socially, at least--with their new countrymen.

In the new country there would be fifty-two card four-suit decks of cards, unfamiliar in that the numerals printed on them would be Roman, rather than Arabic. After the bourre players had mastered the new numerals--or, as one might say, the new card-players' lexicon--would they promptly start playing poker? Certainly not; the chances are they would neither know how to play the game, nor desire to change.

Indeed, let us further suppose that these bourre players came not from one country with one language, but from various countries each of which had a different-looking and different-sounding set of numbers in its language: one in Ibo, one in Twi, one in Dahomean, one in Yoruba, and so on. Might they not be especially inclined to go on using the rules of the game which they found themselves to have in common?

Few slave owners were concerned with teaching the niceties of the language to the Negro. The first English that was taught to him, usually by overseers, was a pidgin which was a grossly oversimplified version of the master's language. It was not of the first importance for the master to understand the slave; the goal was for the slave to understand the master, who may even have made some effort to adapt the pidgin to the structure most readily grasped by the slave.[1]

The Negro in his own peer-group of other slaves, so often from other African countries, had the new lexicon in common with them, and many important elements of structure as well, if we may believe Lorenzo Dow Turner, the one person who has examined in depth one form of rural Negro English, and who has related its structure as well as its phonology to the languages of Africa. The central argument of this discussion is that the Negroes in their cultural isolation, which still endures today, continued to use these structural elements in combination with the new lexicon; that many of these structural elements are even now to be found in the language of many American Negroes, and that this hypothesis may be fairly tested by using criteria taken from Turner's work.

In his book on Africanisms in the Gullah dialect, Turner lists a number of structural similarities between African languages and that dialect. They are:

I. Syntactical Features
    1. Voice: lack of passive form.
    2. Verb phrases: use of two or more verbs together.

3. Comparison of adjectives: use of pre-positioned words like "pass," "mona," and "the most."
4. Verbal adjectives: use of words with combined function of verb and adjective, as in "He tall."
5. Word order: arrangement of sentences unlike that of English because of omission of copula and because African languages have few adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and participles.
6. Repetition: use of redundant phrases such as "My father, he."

II. Morphological Features
   1. Number
      A. Nouns: use of same form in plural as in singular
      B. Verbs: use of same form in plural as in singular
   2. Tense: use of same form for past as for present.
   3. Case
      A. Pronouns: minimum of inflection.
      B. Nouns: minimum of inflection. Genitive often shown by position before noun, as in "My mother house."
      C. Gender (e.g., of animals): use of prefixed word such as "woman" or "man."[2]

What, then, might be expected in autobiographical papers written by colored high school students? They would have little occasion in such papers to use the passive voice (although one notable avoidance of it was found: "It also had a broken gallon jar in the alley"—i.e., "There also was a broken gallon jar in the alley.") With two verbs together, there might be an impression of ellipsis: of something left out. Such an impression might be conveyed by several other of Turner's points: the use of the verbal adjective, the frequent omission of the copula in other places, the omission of prepositions, adverbs, conjunctions, participles. Such Shakespearean adjectives as "the most unkindest" would be anticipated, with general unorthodoxy in the comparison of adjectives, particularly when they share their form with the past participle. Redundancy should be common.

Nouns and verbs should be found often in the singular and sometimes in the plural under circumstances in which the structure of standard English does not allow for such forms. Frequent substitution of the uninflected form for the past tense, and occasional substitution of the past tense form for the present, would be predictable, as would also a general non-standard use of tenses, with a heavy emphasis on the use of the uninflected form. The uninflected genitive would be foreseen. There should be many non-standard uses of all function words, including determiners and auxiliary verbs as well as prepositions and conjunctions; and there should be some idiomatic uses of the language not often found in standard speech.

With these points in mind, tallies were set up covering the following phenomena:

I. Nouns
    1. Singular for plural
    2. Plural for singular
    3. Uninflected genitive
II. Adjectives: non-standard uses
III. Adverbs: non-standard uses
IV. Function words
    1. Pronouns: non-standard uses
    2. Articles: omission
    3. Redundancy: "My father, he"
V. Verbs
    1. Singular for plural
    2. Uninflected form for third singular
    3. Uninflected form for past tense
    4. Past for present
    5. Other non-standard tenses
    6. Other non-standard uses
    7. Omission of the copula

Other omissions of words; non-standard uses of function words; and idiomatic divergencies were both tallied and typed in full, so that they could be analyzed more closely. Separate tallies were set up for the 17th-century relic forms "get me a job" and "childern," to give an idea of the extent to which such forms persist in this dialect. Like tallies were also kept of the use of the empty colloquialism "well" and of other colloquial expressions, to gauge the extent to which such speech habits intrude into the written language; and of the number of students who used slang (in response to the specific invitation to do so) as a guide to how relaxed they found themselves in writing.

The following table shows the occurrence of the anticipated structures in nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and pronouns; the frequency of omitting the indefinite article; and the frequency of such expressions as "My father, he" and "My sister, she." In this table, as in those to follow, the papers of the colored students were analyzed in groups of 40, except that the papers written by the 13 juniors and seniors attending white schools ("CWS") were tallied separately. The number of students using each structure is shown at the left of the column; the number of times the structure was used is shown at the right.

		NOUNS										FUNCTION WORDS					
	Number of students	Sgl. for Plural		Plural for Sgl.		Uninflected Genitive		ADJ.		ADV.		PRON.		Om. ART.		My father, he	
A	40	17	34	4	4	8	12	2	4	1	1	4	6	2	3	3	6
B	40	24	66	3	3	5	9	4	4	0	0	2	2	6	8	1	1
C	40	14	32	1	1	11	19	5	5	3	3	4	4	4	5	0	0
D	40	16	53	0	0	5	10	9	11	1	1	0	0	4	5	3	3
E	40	26	64	2	2	12	19	7	11	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	4
F	40	20	54	2	3	9	12	9	11	2	7	3	3	4	4	1	2
G	40	16	33	3	3	9	13	6	9	2	4	2	2	0	0	2	3
H	40	15	42	3	3	9	15	5	6	4	12	5	5	3	4	3	3
I	22	11	17	1	1	6	8	3	7	1	3	1	1	0	0	0	0
Totals	342	159	395	19	20	74	117	50	68	15	32	22	24	26	32	15	22
CWS	13	1	3	0	0	0	0	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	355	160	398	19	20	74	117	53	71	16	33	22	24	26	32	15	22

It will be noticed in the preceding that both the most common non-standard uses in these categories involved the uninflected form of the noun: that is, the use of the singular form where the plural would be expected in standard English ("I have five brother") and the genitive shown by position ("My father house"). These forms were used by 45.1 percent and 22.1 percent respectively. It will also be observed that the colored students attending white schools had fewer non-standard uses in all these categories (except in non-standard uses of adjectives) than the other colored students. This is to be expected because motivation is a primary factor in learning to use the standard dialect, and the simple fact that these students braved the difficulties of getting admitted to and attending class in predominantly white schools is a reliable test of their motivation. This small group of students exemplify in the remaining charts in this section a similar pattern.

Typical examples in all categories will be given in the appendix. It might be commented here in connection with the adjectives that relatively few (only five) were of the type of "more happier" and "most funniest," although the colored teachers say that such forms abound in the children's speech. Much more common were such forms as "register," "spoil," "bald head," "settle," "cripple," and "retard" for "registered," "spoiled," "bald headed," "settled," "crippled," and "retarded." There were also forms omitting "-ing," such as "hard work" for "hardworking;" and the use of adverb forms such as "easily" for "easy."

Most frequent non-standard adverb uses were those of "sometime" for "sometimes" and "every since" for "ever since."

The second table shows divergent verb forms: third singular for first or second singular or for plural; the uninflected form for the third singular and for the simple past; past for present; other non-standard tenses; other non-standard uses; and omission of forms of the verb "to be."

VERBS			Uninflected forms											
Group	3d sing. for 1st, 2d, pl.		for 3d sing.		for simple past		Past for pres.		Other: tense, number		Other		Omission of copula	
A	12	23	13	32	8	34	7	12	12	17	3	3	10	14
B	16	24	11	19	11	20	2	2	14	20	5	5	12	14
C	13	18	17	38	17	36	2	2	16	26	5	6	10	14
D	12	15	13	25	2	2	9	21	9	21	13	16	4	6
E	17	27	22	64	13	25	2	3	22	41	7	9	8	9
F	9	14	13	34	21	31	4	4	9	14	8	12	8	11
G	17	26	14	30	13	19	4	5	10	13	4	5	11	14
H	17	31	14	24	17	29	5	6	7	12	7	8	12	13
I	9	16	8	13	9	18	2	2	8	10	6	7	3	6
Totals	122	194	125	279	111	214	37	57	107	174	58	71	78	101
CWS	5	6	1	1	2	5	1	2	2	2	0	0	1	3
TOTALS	127	200	126	280	113	219	38	59	109	176	58	71	79	104

The copula was found to be omitted in almost every conceivable position: before adjectives ("He well off"), before adverbs ("That when the fun began"); before determiners ("It a very nice school"); before participles ("When I grown," "They want to know what I going for"); before prepositions ("She in the 9th grade"); before conjunctions ("Maybe it because"); before negative markers ("Courting not that much to me"); and before other verb forms ("Things I like to do play football").

Miscellaneous tense (and number) problems were also varied, the most frequent being the use of the uninflected forms for the past and present participles: "My parents is name," "I'm plan." This, of course, might have been expected from Turner's statement that there are few participles in the languages of West Africa.

The third table shows the persistence of the relic forms "get me a job" ("buy me a car," etc.) and "childern;" colloquialisms; the use of slang; function word troubles; omissions, other than of the determiner and the copula; and idiomatic departures. The number of children using the relic forms and colloquialisms is not given. The numbers of function word troubles, omissions and idiomatic departures are not given.

	Relics		Colloquialisms						
	"get me a job"	"childern"	"Well"	Other	Slang		Function Words	Omissions	Idiom
A	8	1	2	0	0	0	11	24	14
B	0	1	0	0	0	0	10	19	5
C	3	0	0	0	0	0	11	17	5
D	2	0	1	1	0	0	8	17	3
E	3	0	3	0	1	1	8	19	5
F	5	1	0	0	0	0	13	15	6
G	6	1	2	1	1	1	10	17	3
H	1	0	5	0	1	1	4	26	2
I	3	0	1	1	0	0	7	7	6
Totals	31	4	14	3	3	3	82	161	49
CWS	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	4	0
TOTALS	31	4	14	4	3	3	87	165	49

As might be anticipated in the writing of those whose language has a sort of double-exposure effect from a basic structure which has few function words, the attempts at using such words idiomatically are not always successful. Substitutions of one preposition for another are particularly common:

Prepositions	
"in" for "on," "with," "of," "to"	11
"of" for "at," "in," "on," "to"	9
"to" for "at," "of"	9
"on" for "in," "at"	5
"at" for "in," "on," "to"	6
"for for "with," "of"	5
"until" for "that"	2
Subtotal	47
Other	3
Total	50

The insertion of superfluous function words is also common. A superfluous "in," (particularly in phrases such as "My school in which I like very much"), occurs in fourteen instances; superfluous "to" or "on" in another thirteen instances. There were also eight non-idiomatic uses of the conjunctions "which" and "where."

Omissions add up to a total of 237, and, like omissions of the copula, these come in almost every variety, including 176 function word omissions. Nouns are omitted in twenty-two instances; adjectives in ten, including six omissions of the word "old" in such phrases as "He is six months;" adverbs in nine; and main verbs in twenty.

Omissions of function words are as follows:

Pronoun	
Nominative	34
Objective	10
Genitive	3
Subtotal	47
Prepositions	
"of"	9
"in"	18
"at"	6
"to"	10
msc.	10
Subtotal	53
Conjunctions	
"and"	15
msc.	2
Subtotal	17
Auxiliary verbs	
"has," "have"	13
"would" (before "like")	11
msc.	5
Subtotal	29
Negative marker	9
Infinitive marker	21
TOTAL	176

Many of the idiomatic divergencies defy classification. "I was born to the union of Mr. and Mrs. John Doe" is fairly frequent, as is "I was born to the parents of Mr. and Mrs. [names of own parents]."

Some of these students create verbs with an insouciance that is sometimes thought to have disappeared from the face of this linguistic world: "I went site seening," "service my time in the Air Force," "If I don't success in that field," "Nobody could lap me" (i.e., hold me in his lap), "We always made it back up," "Maybe I would like to architect some of the world."

Distinctive idiomatic expressions include "He pass" (i.e., he died), "She is low" (i.e., she is short in stature), "My sister before" (i.e., my older sister), "black hair with a few grey strings," "I guess I'll just face the grown days as they come." And, of course, there are more function word uses that do not fit the standard idiom: fifteen involving the auxiliary verb "would," four involving other auxiliary verbs, two involving other function words.

Function words are a notorious stumbling-block to any would-be speaker of the English language. Adding together all the variances involving function words, the following result is obtained:

Function Words	
Pronouns	22
Articles	26
"My father, he"	15
Tenses (est.)	50
Other verb forms (est.)	29
Copula	79
Omissions	176
Idiom	21
General	87
TOTAL	505

The final table in this chapter shows, in successive columns, the number of students with no non-standard uses in any of the categories tallied; the number with non-standard uses in only one category; the number with non-standard uses in two categories; and so on, through twelve. The final vertical column is devoted to the sum of the number of students multiplied by the number of categories in which there were non-standard uses. Percentages also are given.

Group	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A	1	3	6	7	9	3	4	5	1	0	0	0	1
B	0	8	6	5	9	3	4	1	2	2	0	0	0
C	1	3	10	3	6	5	5	5	1	1	0	0	0
D	3	8	7	4	5	5	4	1	2	0	0	1	0
E	1	1	3	7	8	8	4	2	2	2	2	0	0
F	1	5	6	5	10	3	5	1	1	1	1	0	1
G	5	6	7	4	5	0	1	5	4	2	1	0	0
H	1	7	2	5	10	3	5	1	3	1	2	0	0
I	0	2	4	3	5	2	0	3	2	0	1	0	0
Totals	13	43	51	43	67	32	32	24	18	9	7	1	2
Pct.	.038	.125	.149	.125	.195	.094	.096	.070	.053	.026	.020	.003	.006
CWS	3	2	3	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	16	45	54	45	68	33	33	24	18	9	7	1	2
Pct.	.045	.127	.152	.127	.191	.093	.093	.068	.052	.025	.019	.0025	.005

Thus we see that ninety-five percent of these young people departed from the standard in at least one of the ways suggested by the Turner study, and that on the average they departed from the standard in at least four of these categories. Is this coincidence? Is it coincidence that similar departures are made by the Gullah people in South Carolina and Georgia, by the mulatto people of the Cane River country, by the Negroes of Natchitoches, and by the colored children of California and of New York? This thesis takes the point of view that these young people are still using elements of an African structure with an English lexicon; they are still playing bourre.

What sort of a language has resulted? It is often said that Negro English shows "confusion." Except where there is, so to speak, interference from standard English (as in the function word problem, for example, and in the tendency to overinflect after having become conscious of inflection), this is not true. Expressions like "He tall "My brother house," "Us going," "I have five brother," "It been a long time," and "I come yesterday" are models of clarity and streamlining.

Not only that: they are in the strongest and oldest tradition of the development of the English language. Angles, Saxons, and Jutes took the Germanic languages to the British Isles in the fifth century and pulverized the Celtic tongues. Late in the eighth century the Danish invasions began, speeding up the process of loss of inflection to which the heavily-stressed Germanic tongues were prone. Along came the Normans in 1066 and the denizens of the islands found themselves in much the same position as the Negro slaves in America: their rulers spoke to them in a pidgin English. ("Pidgin" has been defined by Robert Hall as "a language native to neither speaker."[3]) It took; inflections were discarded as a surfacing scuba diver drops weights. Caxton and his Dutch printers (1476) had their own mysterious effect on the language. As more and more foreign words were taken in throughout the ensuing eras, more and more structural fripperies were thrown out. Inflections continue to dwindle in the present day, though much more slowly: note, for example, the fast-disappearing subjunctive.

The English language became the synthetic tongue it is today essentially through processes of pidginization and creolization. (Hall, again, defines "creole" as "pidgin which becomes the native language of a speech community."[4]) The performance was more or less ended only in the 18th century when England simultaneously became the ruler of the seas and spawned a clutch of hellfire-and-brimstone grammarians who managed to make usage a moral issue and through whose fulminations infractions of the "rules" which they discovered (largely under cabbage leaves) attained the status of sin.

Not everyone has admired their efforts. Sterling Leonard Andrus, in his book on the 18th-century doctrine of correctness, says: "Again, if the grammarians had adopted Bayly's suggestion, in which he anticipated Jespersen, that there is no need in English for verbs to vary for person, a perfectly simple regularizing might perhaps have been expected in the third person singular of all verbs except to be."[5]

The Negro is doing his bit to bring about that regularizing; and far from being on the decline, the Negro dialect seems to be spreading in Northern cities. Old English (450-1050) and Middle English (1050-1550) lasted about 500 years each; Modern English has almost had its innings in terms of time. The voracious computer is already demanding a simpler language; the millions of people of other nations to whom English is the second language may also knock off a few of its rough edges and lace ruffles. In about 2050 our language

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Still, before jumping to the conclusion that there is a Negro dialect which will so identify itself upon the written page, it seems advisable to examine papers written by white students to determine whether they depart from the standard in the same way.

For control papers, 355 autobiographies written by white juniors and seniors in Natchitoches Parish high schools were examined on exactly the same basis as those by the colored students. In the following pages, the charts relating to the work of the Negro students, previously used, are repeated above those relating to the work of the white students, so that the two sets may easily be compared.

It was requested that the papers of the colored students be handled in such a way that the individual schools would not be indicated in any way; and this was done. No such request having been made in connection with the white schools, those papers were tabulated by school groups, and it is by such groups that they appear in the charts. School G, at the bottom, is the Parish's one urban white high school, with approximately 550 students in all (many from rural areas); the others are rural schools whose relative size may be gauged by the number of papers received from each.

It will be noticed in the figures in the first chart appearing below that both groups of students diverged most often from standard structure in using singular forms of nouns where plural forms are customarily employed. Almost ten times more colored students did this than white, however.

The next most frequent variation for the colored students was the use of the uninflected genitive, while for the white student it was found in non-standard uses of adjectives. Though in a few instances white students, like the colored, shore "-ed" and "-ing" endings from participial adjectives, they had no uses of the "more better" type; their commonest non-standard form was failure to add the inflectional endings of ordinal numerals. Phrases like "the three grade" occurred eleven times in the white papers, not at all in the colored.

Under adverbs, the use of "sometime" for "sometimes" occurred once in the white students' papers, and "every since" for "ever since" three times. It will be noted that none of the white students used the redundant pronoun in expressions like "My father, he", though this expression is common enough in white speech.

Colored

		NOUNS										FUNCTION WORDS					
	Number of students	Sgl. for Plural		Plural for Sgl.		Uninflected Genitive		ADJ.		ADV.		PRON.		Om. ART.		My father, he	
A	40	17	34	4	4	8	12	2	4	1	1	4	6	2	3	3	6
B	40	24	66	3	3	5	9	4	4	0	0	2	2	6	8	1	1
C	40	14	32	1	1	11	19	5	5	3	3	4	4	4	5	0	0
D	40	16	53	0	0	5	10	9	11	1	1	0	0	4	5	3	3
E	40	26	64	2	2	12	19	7	11	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	4
F	40	20	54	2	3	9	12	9	11	2	7	3	3	4	4	1	2
G	40	16	33	3	3	9	13	6	9	2	4	2	2	0	0	2	3
H	40	15	42	3	3	9	15	5	6	4	12	5	5	3	4	3	3
I	22	11	17	1	1	6	8	3	7	1	3	1	1	0	0	0	0
Totals	342	159	395	19	20	74	117	50	68	15	32	22	24	26	32	15	22
CWS	13	1	3	0	0	0	0	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	355	160	398	19	20	74	117	53	71	16	33	22	24	26	32	15	22

White

		NOUNS										FUNCTION WORDS					
Number of students		Sgl. for Plural		Plural for Sgl.		Uninflected Genitive		ADJ.		ADV.		PRON.		Om. ART.		My father, he	
A	42	2	5	0	0	2	2	2	2	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0
B	26	5	7	0	0	0	0	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
C	8	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
D	19	4	9	0	0	2	5	5	7	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
E	24	2	4	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
F	42	10	16	0	0	7	11	4	6	3	5	4	5	2	2	0	0
G	194	17	30	3	9	1	1	8	11	4	6	12	12	3	3	0	0
TOTALS	355	41	72	4	10	14	21	24	32	10	16	19	20	5	5	0	0

In the second table, concerned with verbs, it will be noticed that twenty-one white students used the third person singular form for the first or second person singular or for the plural. In nine of the twenty-five instances, the verb was at some distance from its subject; many unskilled writers have difficulty under these circumstances.

The colored students most frequently used the uninflected form of the verb in cases where the third person singular or the simple past tense were called for. Next most common for them was the use of the third singular form as noted above, whereas the white students' next most frequent non-standard use came under the heading of "Other"--mostly those more elaborate forms which, again, cause problems for unskilled writers.

Colored

VERBS **Group**	3d sing. for 1st, 2d, pl.		Uninflected forms for 3d sing.		Uninflected forms for simple past		Past for pres.		Other: tense, number		Other		Omission of copula	
A	12	23	13	32	8	34	7	12	12	17	3	3	10	14
B	16	24	11	19	11	20	2	2	14	20	5	5	12	14
C	13	18	17	38	17	36	2	2	16	26	5	6	10	14
D	12	15	13	25	2	2	9	21	9	21	13	16	4	6
E	17	27	22	64	13	25	2	3	22	41	7	9	8	9
F	9	14	13	34	21	31	4	4	9	14	8	12	8	11
G	17	26	14	30	13	19	4	5	10	13	4	5	11	14
H	17	31	14	24	17	29	5	6	7	12	7	8	12	13
I	9	16	8	13	9	18	2	2	8	10	6	7	3	6
TOTALS	122	194	125	279	111	214	37	57	107	174	58	71	78	101
CWS	5	6	1	1	2	5	1	2	2	2	0	0	1	3
TOTALS	127	200	126	280	113	219	38	59	109	176	58	71	79	104
White														
A	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	3	4	2	2
B	3	5	3	3	0	0	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2
C	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0
D	0	0	2	3	3	10	0	0	1	2	2	3	0	0
E	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0
F	6	6	2	2	8	11	2	2	9	9	3	5	3	6
G	10	11	10	13	13	22	5	8	10	12	11	12	6	6
TOTALS	21	25	19	23	27	47	9	13	23	26	28	33	13	16

In the third chart, below, we find for the first time a category in which white tabulated uses greatly exceed the colored: in the use of slang. This greater use of slang would seem to indicate a much more relaxed attitude toward the written word.

Colored

	Relics		Colloquialisms						
	"get me a job"	"children"	"Well"	Other	Slang		Function Words	Omissions	Idiom
A	8	1	2	0	0	0	11	24	14
B	0	1	0	0	0	0	10	19	5
C	3	0	0	0	0	0	11	17	5
D	2	0	1	1	0	0	8	17	3
E	3	0	3	0	1	1	8	19	5
F	5	1	0	0	0	0	13	15	6
G	6	1	2	1	1	1	10	17	3
H	1	0	5	0	1	1	4	26	2
I	3	0	1	1	0	0	7	7	6
Totals	31	4	14	3	3	3	82	161	49
CWS	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	4	0
TOTALS	31	4	14	4	3	3	87	165	49

White

	"get me a job"	"children"	"Well"	Other	Slang		Function Words	Omissions	Idiom
A	1	0	1	0	1	1	5	7	1
B	0	0	0	3	3	3	1	6	1
C	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0
D	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	0
E	0	1	0	0	3	4	0	3	1
F	1	0	1	0	4	4	5	16	3
G	3	1	5	5	33	52	23	44	6
TOTALS	7	2	8	10	44	64	34	81	12

The fourth table, below, shows function word problems by race; it will be observed that conjunctions gave the white students about as much trouble as they gave the colored.

	Colored	White
Substitutions		
Prepositions		
in (on, with, of, to)	11	4
of (at, in, on, to)	9	5
to (at, of)	9	0
on (in, at)	5	4
at (in, on, to)	6	0
for (with, of)	5	0
until (that)	2	0
Subtotal	47	13
Msc.	3	0
Subtotal	50	13
Superfluities		
in	13	1
to, on	13	2
Subtotal	26	3
Conjunctions	6	5
TOTALS	82	21

In the fifth table, omissions are shown by race; note that almost as many white as colored students omitted main verbs, and that students of both races omitted a good many nouns. This may be attributed to teen-age carelessness and probably has no relevance to structure.

OMISSIONS	Colored	White
Nouns	22	15
Adjectives		
"old"	6	1
other	4	1
Subtotals	10	2
Adverbs	9	2
Function words		
Pronouns		
nominative	34	14
objective	10	3
genitive	3	3
Subtotals	47	20
Prepositions		
"of"	9	1
"in"	18	2
"at"	6	1
"to"	10	5
msc.	10	4
Subtotals	53	13
Conjunctions		
"and"	15	2
msc.	2	3
Subtotals	17	5
Auxiliary verbs		
"has," "have"	13	5
"would" (before "like")	11	1
msc.	5	2
Subtotals	29	8
Negative marker	9	3
Infinitive marker	21	1
Total function words	176	50
Main verbs	20	18
TOTALS	237	87

As for idiomatic uses by the white students, four (not used by the colored students) are so characteristic in local speech that they should perhaps have been recorded as colloquialisms: "I liked to have drowned," "can't hardly afford it," "His work carries him many different places," "I was raised up." Interestingly, two white students used the phrase "I was born to the parents of [giving own parents' names]".

Comparing all function word problems of both races, the result is:

Function Words	Colored	White
Pronouns	22	19
Articles	26	5
"My father, he"	15	0
Tenses (est)	50	12
Other verb forms (est)	29	14
Copula	79	13
Other omissions	176	50
Idiom	21	1
General	87	21
TOTALS	505	135

The final table shows, as in the previous chapter, the number of students with non-standard uses in any of the categories tallied; the number with non-standard uses in only one category; the number with non-standard uses in two categories; and so on, through twelve. The final vertical column is devoted to the sum of the number of students multiplied by the number of categories in which there were non-standard uses. Percentages also are given.

Colored

Group	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Totals
A	1	3	6	7	9	3	4	5	1	0	0	0	1	166
B	0	8	6	5	9	3	4	1	2	2	0	0	0	151
C	1	3	10	3	6	5	5	5	1	1	0	0	0	163
D	3	8	7	4	5	5	4	1	2	0	0	1	0	137
E	1	1	3	7	8	8	4	2	2	2	2	0	0	192
F	1	5	6	5	10	3	5	1	1	1	1	0	1	163
G	5	6	7	4	5	0	1	5	4	2	1	0	0	153
H	1	7	2	5	10	3	5	1	3	1	2	0	0	171
I	0	2	4	3	5	2	0	3	2	0	1	0	0	96
Totals	13	43	51	43	67	32	32	24	18	9	7	1	2	1392
Pct.	.038	.125	.149	.125	.195	.094	.096	.070	.053	.026	.020	.003	.006	
CWS	3	2	3	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	29
TOTALS	16	45	54	45	68	33	33	24	18	9	7	1	2	1421
Pct.	.045	.127	.152	.127	.191	.093	.093	.068	.052	.025	.019	.0025	.005	
White														
A	16	17	5	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	41
B	10	8	2	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31
C	3	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
D	7	6	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23
E	10	8	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23
F	11	13	3	3	7	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	90
G	93	52	23	18	1	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	202
TOTALS	150	106	42	33	11	5	4	2	1	0	0	0	1	418
Pct.	.421	.298	.118	.093	.031	.014	.010	.005	.0025	0	0	0	.0025	

The total number of colored students with non-standard uses in three or fewer categories was 150, or .444; of whites, 331, or .94. The total number of colored students with non-standard uses in six or more categories was 93, or .292; of whites, eight, or .028. The colored students averaged non-standard uses in four categories each; the colored students in white schools, in 2.23 categories each; the white students, in 1.18 categories each.

The really interesting thing about this comparative study is that there is no non-standard usage common to the colored which is not sometimes used by some whites, and that there are not a few whites who write a reasonable facsimile of what we might be inclined to call "Negro dialect."

Is it then, to be concluded that there is a deep African sub-structure in the language of many Southern whites? That through the process of cultural transmission, often through colored servants and colored playmates in early childhood, the dialect of the less cultivated Southern white has a decidedly African cast?

Not necessarily. There are two other considerations to be taken into account. Any freshman composition teacher anywhere would be justified, after scanning the preceding charts, in responding with a cynical look and the question: "What other sub-standard uses are there, if punctuation and spelling are not taken into account?" To be sure, there are a few others, but most of them are involved in attempts to achieve more complicated structures. In any community where many students do not use the standard dialect, these are just the "errors" that will be found: uses that tend further to simplify a language that is already distinguished by its great inflectional simplicity. The chances are that in the end, many of them will prevail, as they have prevailed before.

As for the second factor, one which relates closely to the general Southern dialect, we must return to Mr. Krapp, his ancestors, his heirs, and his assigns.

"Mr. [James Russell] Lowell, almost the greatest and finest realist who ever wrought in verse, showed us that Elizabeth was still Queen where he heard Yankee farmers talk," William Dean Howells wrote in Criticism and Fiction three-quarters of a century ago.[6] Perhaps

Mr. Howells would be much surprised to find that the speech era of The Virgin Queen has not yet entirely passed away from the South, where things move more slowly. Many an outsider is dazzled to hear even today such Elizabethan forms as "holp" for the past tense of "help," and "wound" (i.e., injury) pronounced to rhyme with "sound."

Other survivals are less easily recognized by the linguistic amateur; but the scholar soon finds that virtually every departure from grammatical norms has respectable antecedents. "The construction of *I is* and the use of the third person singular present for all persons and both numbers of the present tense of *to be* seems as characteristically Negro as anything in the language. But it is not abnormal or unparalleled English. From the thirteenth century, forms *I is*, *you is*, *we*, *you*, *they is* are on record in the northern dialects of English, and Wright's *Dialect Dictionary* contains numerous examples from remote localities in modern England," Krapp wrote in 1924.[7]

J. H. Combs elaborated in 1916 on other English relics in Southern speech:

> We find *her* and *him* for *she* and *he*; *them* for *they*. . . . Relatives are omitted where they are now necessary; *e.g.*, on a rude tombstone this inscription is found: "God bless those sleeps here." . . . It is quite common to find the insertion of an unnecessary pronoun, e.g., "The British, they". . . . As with the Elizabethans, the double comparative and the double superlative are common; e.g., *more fightin'er*, *most knittin'est*. . . . Singular verb forms are used with plural nouns, and singular nouns are used with plural verb forms. E.g., "These horses *is* well groomed"; "I *weren't* there at the time." *Shall*, *should*, *will* and *would* are hopelessly confused, and are used interchangeably. . . . Brevity is the soul of the mountaineer's language. It causes him almost to discard the pronoun subject in his conversation. He frequently omits

> the auxiliary. . . . The adjective is freely used as an adverb, e.g., "Zeke pulled the ground-hog out'n the hole easy." . . . *For to* is widely used in the Southern mountains. . . . "I went *for to* tell him a piece of my mind." . . . The third person plural [of verbs] often ends in -s, the E.E. [Early English] northern ending. . . . "Heavy rains hurts the vine-patches." It is in this respect that the mountaineer's language most closely parallels Elizabethan usage. . . . Preterite forms in *u* are common, as in "He *begun* to lay by (finish working) his crop yesterday." This is even carried over to the verb *bring*, in "He *brung* three horses to town." . . . The ending *-ed* is usually dropped in the preterite in verbs whose infinitive ends in *-t*. E.g., "He *sweat* a heap when he pulled the groun'-hog out." . . . In keeping with the Elizabethan custom of dropping the inflection *-en*, the curtailed forms of the past participle are commonly used. We have here such words as: *drove*, *eat*, *froze*, *hold*, *took*, *mistook*, *rode*, *smit*, *strove*, *writ*, *wrote*, and many others, used for the past participle ending, *-en*. Verbs, conjunctions and other parts of speech are freely omitted.[8]

Alberta Harris, in a thesis written for C. M. Wise at LSU in 1948, gave many Scotch-Irish pronunciations of the 17th and 18th centuries that are familiar to Southern ears and tongues. She also says that nouns ending in "st" form their plural in /əz/ or /ɪz/ in the Midland, Southern and Southwestern dialects of England (she mentions /gostəz, nestəz, postəz/), thus throwing light on the consonant cluster problem that makes "antses" a common vocal pluralization of "ants" and that accounts for all those missing "s's" in freshman themes on plural forms of words like "Communist."[9]

Albert H. Marckwardt, writing in his book *American English*, mentions as older forms lack of pluralizing inflection after numbers ("ten mile"); the absolute pronouns "hisn," "hern" and "yourn" which were modelled on "mine" and accepted for awhile but later discarded; elimination of the third singular ("he want") or its extension to first and second, ("Ihas some good friends," "Is you coming"); and use of the past participle for the past tense ("I taken," "he done," and so on.)[10] "He do" persists in old-fashioned rural speech in Southern England.[11]

The causative factors of the Negro dialect are not simple. Mental illness, too, was once thought to be a rather simple thing. Now we know that it may be due to a miserable homelife or a miserable nervous heritage, alcoholism, narcotics, unlooked-for side effects of medication, climate, fatigue, some normal dietary constituent which for the particular sufferer has the effect of loco weed--or to the fact that the patient happens to be a perfectly sane man in a crazy world: that is, one to whose civilization he is unsuited. Any one of these things may cause mental illness; in most cases several of them work together to produce the result, and each intensifies the other.

It is the contention of this thesis that something of that nature has happened with the Negro dialect: that the African substratum is very real and of the first importance, but that it has long been masked by three other factors which have had the effect of giving it a strong tail wind. These factors are (1) the influence of simplification in the original pidgin taught to the Negro slaves; (2) the influence of the 17th century (and earlier) forms which were the first he learned; and (3) the tendency of the un-bookish to do what comes naturally: to simplify, rather than to elaborate, the language.

A simple test of the influence of African structure, not only on the Negro dialect, but also on the dialect of the white Southerner in whose childhood home the Negro servant—cook, nurse, yard boy—has been almost taken for granted, might be made by comparing the analyses given above with a similar analysis of papers written by white children in communities where no Negroes have ever lived. One set of such papers was obtained from a school in a hill community in an adjacent parish and papers written by students whose parents were not born in the community were eliminated. The following table expresses the results:

	Percentages of students		
Non-standard uses:	Natchitoches Parish		
Number of categories	Colored	White	Hill Community
None	.045	.421	.538
One	.127	.298	.231
Two	.152	.118	.231
SUBTOTALS	.324	.837	1.000
Three or more	.675	.155	

Moreover, in the papers written by students in the hill community, the non-standard uses which were, in fairness, tallied, were not of the sort which are most prominent in the papers written by the colored students. Only one student used a singular noun in place of a plural noun, and this was "pest" for "pests"; the consonant cluster ending is a notorious stumbling block for students of both races. Only one used a verb in non-standard number, and this was "he don't," long familiar in white speech. The other non-standard uses were substitutions of function words, omission of words (not including the article or the copula) and non-standard idioms.

Because of the smallness of the sample, this is not offered as a scientific test of the proposition that remnants of the African substructure have crept into the Southern dialect. However, it does strongly suggest the tenability of that conclusion, and a direction for future research.

CHAPTER III

LEVELS AND LEARNING

Language has many levels, of which the four major ones are sometimes defined as the formally correct; the fully accepted, or standard informal; trade or technical; and popular.[1] Under the latter heading come the many dialects with one of which this paper is principally concerned. Their origin, Hans Kurath says, lies in "Social and regional separation of varying degrees, [which] results in . . . sets of socially or regionally restricted forms of speech. The looser the net of communication, the greater the differences in speech will be with the passing of time, as between social sets in one community or region, or as between regions."[2]

A dialect, as defined by Raven McDavid, "is simply a habitual variety of a language, regional or social. It is set off from all other such habitual varieties by a unique combination of language features: words and meanings, grammatical forms, phrase structures, pronunciations, patterns of stress and intonation. No dialect is simply good or bad in itself; its prestige comes from the prestige of those who use it. But every dialect is in itself a legitimate form of the language, a valid instrument of human communication, and something worthy of serious study."[3]

As is not true in other countries, many of which have, like England, a Received Standard, everyone in the United States speaks a regional dialect, be it Eastern New England, Mountain Southern, Brooklyn or some other. Within the regional dialects are many levels of class dialects. People of the working class, as W. Nelson Francis says, talk with one another much more often than with members of the ruling class, and their way of life is quite different. In time they develop different vocabularies and such differences in pronunciation and grammar that they speak "different social or class dialects, even though they live in the same village."[4]

The kind of language a man uses tells his social status and, of course, much else. It has a good deal of what anthropologist Willard Walker defines as "referential meaning . . . the information about the non-linguistic environment of a speaker which is communicated by a linguistic form." It may reveal, among other things, whether the speaker is a native, for if he is not, Walker points out, he is subject to interference from his original language.[5] State of health and state of mind are also indirectly conveyed by language, says William G. Moulton, and language may tell us where the speaker comes from.[6] Polish, technicality and key are three other dimensions which are decoded, according to Gleason.[7]

To return to social dialects, they have at least three levels; as Albert H. Marckwardt puts it, they may be described as "the assured, the anxious, and the indifferent—a division corresponding roughly to the three level stratification of society into upper, middle, and lower classes."[8] It is the middle, or anxious, group which includes the staunchest supporters of the prescriptive grammarians and lexicographers. McDavid comments: "The tendency to abandon local folk-pronunciations and substitute pseudo-elegant or spelling pro ciations is most characteristic of the newly-risen middle class

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are anxious to differentiate themselves from the illiterate and less fortunate in their community. The uneducated person knows only the folk-usage; the person sure of his position in the community feels no necessity to change the pronunciation normal to him and his family."[9] Werner Cohn also stresses this point, stating that "We fear lower class speech and are inclined to give it no quarter," and relating disdain for such speech directly to the "precariousness" of the linguistic snob's own social position.[10]

The speakers of the "anxious" social dialect have their own folkways, and one of these is a belief that the speakers of the "indifferent" social dialect are not bright. This belief is all too often seemingly confirmed by the results of the ubiquitous standard intelligence rating tests. Current research indicates that one of the main reasons for the difference between scores of white children and those of Negro children on such tests is simply that the tests themselves are couched in the middle-class dialect which many of the colored children do not speak, and are based on middle-class experiences which many of the colored children have not had. "It would appear that differences between Negroes and whites on subconventional intelligence tests, and especially on vocabulary subtests, may be primarily due to failure in verbal communication rather than in comprehension," write psychologists Arnold S. Carson and A. I. Rabin, noting that the principal score differences are on the tasks requiring verbal comprehension and verbal expression.[11] Group intelligence tests and achievement tests measure experience, not gray matter. Most of these youngsters will score low because had the experience

they have not [illegible] encompassed in the test," Murial Crosby of Wilmingt[illegible], said at the 1964 Conference on Social Dialects.[12]

In short, a low-prestige dialect connotes, as McDavid has repeatedly urged, not intellectual or moral inferiority, but simply that the speaker "grew up in an environment where such a form of speech was used." Education must not only give these people command of the standard dialect so that they can realize their potential, he says, but it must also both acquire and disseminate understanding of dialectal minorities.[13]

That this must be done region by region and almost community by community is quite clear. The situation in the South is especially complex, and not least so in Louisiana. The new resident of that state—a native of Colorado, let us suppose—who goes out to fish for "trout" and finds himself with a creel full of bass; or who is told that "salamanders" cause those little mounds of earth on his lawn (only to have his amazement compounded when he sees a bright-eyed gopher sitting on top of one of these hills of fresh dirt); soon learns that he has come to a land where a very different regional dialect is spoken. The anthropologist Edward Sapir once wrote "No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached."[14] For the stranger living in Louisiana this phenomenon becomes well-known and even more eerie, because most of the labels are not different. The lexicon is an almost completely familiar one, but the attitudes, conventions, reactions, beliefs, patterns of thinking and ways of doing to which the words refer are often not at all the same as those to which he is accustomed; and while it is easy to learn that in Louisiana "evening" may be any time after noon, and that a salamander is not a lizard-like creature, other of the different meanings and shades of meanings may be years in the learning, and many are never understood.

Similar misunderstandings are in store for white and colored teachers and students as their contacts become more and more frequent; for they and their forebears have lived side by side in different worlds for as many as 250 years. There is no easy way to solve this problem; it has been decades in the making, it will be many more in the unmaking. For both teachers and students to know that it is there can be helpful.

Another pitfall can be completely avoided if teachers will remember, when working with students who have traces, large or small, of Negro English, that this dialect in its structural aspect has nothing whatever to do with communication. English teachers like to believe that the use of the standard grammar somehow lends to clarity of meaning. There is no truth in this. The eminent practicality of the non-standard forms has already been discussed at some length in the preceding pages. The skeptic might do well to read an unpublished doctoral dissertation (University of Michigan, 1965) by Robert Sencer: "An Investigation of the Effects of Incorrect Grammar on Attitude and Comprehension in Written English Messages." The effect on attitude was found to be considerable; the effect on comprehension was, in brief, nil.

One effect of substandard language on the attitude of a cultivated person has been well-stated by R. A. Close, who says: "It is a fact of human behavior that ignorance or misuse of the conventions of language has the effect of diverting the hearer's attention toward our 'mistakes' and away from our meaning, and even of alienating our hearer's sympathy altogether so that he can't bear to listen to us any longer."[15] This sort of thing has been decried by Robert A. Hall, Jr., in his choleric book Leave Your Language Alone (1950; reprinted in paperback ten years later as Linguistics and Your Language):

> The really fundamental problem is to get rid of the undemocratic attitude that underlies the whole situation, that makes us condemn variant speech forms. . . . [Standards] are criteria imposed from the outside, for motives of laziness and snobbery. . . . The real reason behind condemning somebody for saying Armitice or buffet dress is the desire to put that person in his or her place. . . . The merit of what a person says or does is not in any way affected by the way in which they say it or do it, provided it is the most efficient way of saying or doing it; and to accept or reject someone just because of "correct" or "incorrect" speech is to show oneself superficial, lazy, and snobbish.[16]

This statement from a Cornell professor is interesting and worthy of respectful consideration, but there is more to the situation than he seems to think. Grossly substandard language uses do not tell us that the speaker is worthless or despicable. Most often they tell us simply, even heart-rendingly, that behind that language lie years of grinding poverty and a lack of all those pleasures that make life for the more fortunate so well worth living: the pleasures of the museum, the concert hall, the library, even the pleasures of the table.

They tell the employer whose requirements for verbal competence are high—the doctor or the lawyer, let us say—that he cannot hire this person as a secretary, because she would not know where to look in the dictionary for words like *certiorari* or deoxyribonucleic. They may tell the lady of the house that this person would not be a competent gardener, because he could not read the directions for running the power mower or for applying the insecticide safely. They tell the philosophically-inclined *vis-a-vis* that no matter how much he might like to be a friend, on an equal footing, he could not succeed, for he himself can talk with very great interest only about Kant and Susanne Langer and Teilhard de Chardin, and there is no common meeting ground.

Emerson said it in his address on "The American Scholar": "I learn immediately from any speaker how much he has already lived, through the poverty or splendor of his speech."[17] Always when dealing with problems of substandard dialect, we must keep it in the backs of our minds that in most cases we are dealing only with a symptom; that the basic job is a war on that poverty.

In the meantime there is much that can be done about the symptom. It is a challenge to the American educational system, and one that there is danger in not meeting. The British astronomer Fred Hoyle, in an essay entitled "The Anatomy of Doom," wrote that in five hundred years, give or take a few, the population of the world should be so enormous that each person would have just one square yard of the earth's surface. But, Hoyle continues, there is no point in worrying about this, because actually, long before it happens, so many people will have starved to death that it will not come to pass. But he goes on to say that there is no point in worrying about that, either, because long before it comes to pass, the system will have broken down.[18]

In short, we face catastrophe, Hoyle believes; and one of the reasons is that we are not producing enough educated, competent people to run our vast technology. Poor service in places of business, lack of quality in manufactured goods, the undeniable presence of incompetents in many positions: these phenomena daily underscore Hoyle's point. To put bluntly another aspect of this problem, we can afford the three R's more readily than we can afford the one big "R" that stands for Riots. If we cannot overnight give these young people splendor in the Emersonian sense, at least we can give them verbal adequacy. This is a job for the schools.

Verbal inadequacy is a perennial problem for the Negro college student, and not only in formerly all-white colleges. Eunice Shaed Newton, director of the Bennett College Reading-Study Skills Center, has found that many of the students attending Bennett are what she calls "verbally destitute." "The low level of their skills," she says, "makes it almost impossible for them to secure maximum concepts commensurate with their learning potential in this verbal world in which we live."[19] Not only must this verbal destitution be relieved, but the Negro student who has a substantial amount of interference from the creole language which is here identified as Negro English must also become at least bidialectal if he is to compete in the labor market.

Verbal problems, as evidenced by a substandard dialect, are, in short, a serious handicap to the Negro in these two fields of education and employment. But we cannot intelligently help him without understanding the dilemma presented by the way in which his speech level affects his social status. William Labov has stated this eloquently:

> How is it that young people who are exposed to the Standard English of their teachers for twelve years cannot reproduce this style for twelve minutes in a job interview? The problem is parallel to the more serious question as to how a student can sit through eight to ten years of school without learning to read more than a few words. Those who feel that they can solve this problem by experimenting with the machinery of the learning process are measuring small causes against large effects. My own feeling is that the primary interference with the acquisition of Standard English stems from a conflict of value systems.
>
> Language may be looked upon as a system for integrating values. Linguistics has made the most progress in analyzing the cognitive component; but many elements of language (certainl; not all) are imbued with noncognitive values as well, and the total information conveyed in these noncognitive functions may outweigh the cognitive information. In our subjective reaction tests we have studied only those values which follow the middle class patterns: the suitability of a speech form for various occupations. But there are other values, values which support the use of the vernacular style of the working class, and the social stratification of language. . . . There are many New Yorkers, for example, who feel no desire to be identified with middle class, white collar workers. They deliberately turn aside from white collar jobs in seeking lower skilled, lower paid manual work. Identification with the class of people that includes one's friends and family is a powerful factor in explaining linguistic behavior. Furthermore, I believe that we can establish that the working class style of casual speech has values strongly associated with masculinity. . . .
>
> There are also negative factors in the conflict of value systems. The adolescent peer group exerts strong pressure against any deviation in the direction of middle class standards . . . If it is true that adolescent groups do not permit free experimentation with middle class language styles, and that they penalize members who try to put into practice the teaching of the schools, then the practical problem of urban dialect engineering will have such group constraints as a major focus.

> It will be necessary to build into the community a tolerance for style shifting which is helpful in educational and occupational advancement.[20]

A sincere effort at changing the traditional dichotomy of the society is the suggestion of Einar Haugen, who says "To become bidialectal is to acquire a dual identity, and we must never forget that the Negro dialect or any dialect identifies the pupil with his family, his playmates and most of his later associates. We should, therefore, beware of tearing them out of context without making sure that there is at the same time, in the American white society, a change of heart and of law which will make them able to work at their language lessons with some kind of happy assurance that their efforts are not in vain."[21]

The teacher also needs some assurance that his own efforts will not be in vain. What can he do effectively when he finds himself confronted by a roomful of children, even of college students, the majority of whom are using substandard forms perhaps because of interference from African substructures, perhaps because of lingering pidginitis, perhaps because of culturally carried over structures dating back for centuries, perhaps because of the tendency in all folk speech to simplify structure, and perhaps because of all these things?

One thing he can do is to understand something of the linguistic learning process. Noam Chomsky was quoted in 1962 as saying that a child is born with a "built-in genetically transmitted mechanism to master the rules of various tongues," and that language can best be learned between the ages of two and the teens, when this instinctive basis exists.[22] Subsequent studies have indicated that the earliest years are compellingly formative. "It is important to note," says William A. Stewart, "that by school age, that is, by the age of six or seven, the average, mentally normal child will already have internalized most of the basic phonological and grammatical patterns of at least one linguistic system, and indeed perhaps more, if the child has been raised bilingually."[23] Levels in the acquisition of spoken English were meticulously detailed by William Labov at the Conference on Social Dialects:

> 1. The basic grammar. The first level is the mastery of the main body of grammatical rules and the lexicon of spoken English, in such a form that the child can communicate his basic needs and experiences to his parents. This stage is normally achieved under the linguistic influence of the parents. . .
>
> 2. The vernacular. The second stage is the most important one from the point of view of the evolution of the language. In the preadolescent years, roughly ages five to twelve, the child learns the use of the local dialect in a form consistent with that of his immediate groups of friends and associates. At this stage, neighborhood dialect characteristics become automatically established responses in the pattern of everyday speech, and the influence of the parents is submerged under the influence of the peer group. . .
> 3. Social perception. The third stage begins with early adolescence, as the child begins to come into wider contact with the adult world. The social significance of the dialect characteristics of his friends becomes gradually apparent to him as he becomes exposed to other speech forms, even while he himself is still confined to the single style of his own vernacular. . .
> 4. Stylistic variation. In the next stage, the child begins to learn how to modify his speech in the direction of the prestige standard, in formal situations, or even to some extent in casual speech. The great turning point seems to be exposure to a group larger than the neighborhood group in the first year of high school. . .
> 5. The consistent standard. It is not enough to be able to use standard speech forms sporadically. The ability to maintain standard styles of speech for any length of time is often not

> acquired at all. . . . The ability to switch to a standard style of speech and maintain that style with reasonable consistency is acquired primarily by the middle class groups. . .
>
> 6. The full range. Some speakers attain complete consistency, or something close to it, in range of styles appropriate for a wide range of occasions. Comparatively few . . . attain this level of skill in speaking, and those who do are mostly college educated persons with special interest in speech. . . .[24]

In short, the linguistic habits of the child are fixed, not in the classroom, but by his parents and nurses in early childhood, and largely by his peers from that time onward. As Bergen Evans told the Associated Press Managing Editors at their convention in 1963, "You couldn't be admitted to kindergarten if you were not already fairly conversant with the English language; and the great place for learning English in the school system is the schoolyard. This teaches you a great deal more than you get in school. One sneer in the schoolyard will do more to correct the deviation from the norm of that group than any amount of parental thundering."[25] It is to be remembered that that sneer is as apt to be in the direction of a substandard form as otherwise.

Parents, like teachers, play a relatively minor role, as is being dramatically illustrated in the nation's capital, with its big influx of Negroes from the Deep South. "It is easy," Stewart says, "to find cases involving second or third generation Washington Negro families in which the parents are speakers of a quite standard variety of English, but where the children's speech is much closer to that of the newer immigrants. The explanation seems to be that heavy post-war immigration has dialectally swamped much of the younger generation of native Washingtonians."[26] Labov notes that

Negro dialect is being copied by lower-class white New Yorkers.[27]

Armed with an understanding of the fact that the child acquired most of his language with little help or hindrance from the schoolroom, the teacher's next step is to learn to recognize and respect dialectal forms. Many cogent appeals have been made for such understanding. The British scholar Frank Whitehead, writing for teachers in that land where there are many regional dialects, some of which are almost mutually unintelligible, and where "the King's English" is the only received standard, says: "At present far too many children are made to feel inferior, ashamed, or even sinful, because they find it natural to speak the same group language as their parents. Pronunciation, dialect, local idiom, colloquialisms and slang should be considered dispassionately, with the tone that belongs to a sociological inquiry and not to a linguistic witch-hunt."[28]

Success is most likely, says Thomas J. Creswell, with a program that tries to augment the child's language, instead of trying to supplant it altogether. "Probably any method which has surface plausibility will work to some extent," he says, "provided those being taught will endure it; what is most important is to design a method which is endurable." This, he adds, means emphasizing difference, not superiority or inferiority; and since emphasizing difference is the opposite of what most teachers are inclined to, it is not surprising that they often fail.[29]

Provocative of long, long thoughts by members of the teaching profession are these dispassionate strictures by Labov:

Another negative factor undoubtedly exists in the conflict of values symbolized by the difference between the teachers' speech and the students'. Although English teachers have been urged for many years to treat the nonstandard vernaculars as simply "different" from Standard English, it is clear that the prevailing attitude is that the students' vernacular is "bad English," "incorrect," and "sloppy" speech. It would be surprising if this were not so. The survey of New York City shows that such opinions of the teacher reflect an almost universal sentiment of the speech community. The conflict is a covert one: both teacher and student may be only partly aware of the value systems which bring them into unyielding opposition.

Most teachers in the New York City system probably follow the pattern of [the lower middle class] for a great many features of speech. In casual speech, they unconsciously use forms which they themselves stigmatize in the speech of others. When they pronounce words in isolation, they use an even higher percentage of prestige forms than those who use these forms naturally in casual speech. Their performance is governed by certain norms, and these norms are the sounds or images that they hear themselves use. Thus the teacher will frequently condemn students in strong, moralistic terms for the use of speech forms that she frequently uses herself without being aware of them. There are undoubtedly many nonstandard forms used by the students that the teacher does not use, but the essential fact is that the teacher has no more tolerance for style shift than the adolescent groups. . . . Neither teacher nor student is aware of the fact that they both follow the same pattern of style-shifting in their language, though at different levels. The teacher struggles to impose a fixed standard, which she mistakenly believes she follows herself, upon youngsters who mistakenly believe that they also make no concession to the other side in daily life. In the data from the New York City survey, we see some evidence for the view that teachers may be transferring to students their own inner conflicts; they recoil from a kind of behavior that is still very much a part of their own personalities. On the other hand, the student may rightfully feel that the teacher threatens him in trying to abolish completely the speech pattern that identifies him as a member of his own group: this is the group that he respects, that awards him prestige, that establishes his masculinity.

These comments suggest that the conflict of values should be investigated in the classroom itself. The foregoing remarks are merely extrapolations from observations made in a community study, and they are based on the least favorable case, in which a male student faces a female teacher. . . .[30]

It should be stressed again that the teacher is dealing, not with corrupt and incorrupt forms of the same language, but with basically different forms which in effect constitute different languages, and that nowhere is this more true than in the case of intrusions by the Negro English creole. Its very similarity to the standard makes more difficulties for the student in switching, rather than fewer; as Einar Haugen says: "All scholars have agreed that it is harder to keep two similar languages apart than two very different languages."[31]

The student who, with this handicap, is trying to become bidialectal, must be expected to have considerable difficulty with both phonological and grammatical interference, Gleason says, stating that such students are struggling against an "automatic conformity" which is stronger than habit and which partakes of the nature of instinct. Anyone who wants to teach these children a new system must do it against the background of the old, Gleason says.[32] The teacher must also anticipate that "The student with a system of stress- and pitch-sequences different from those of the instructor wil probably have his peculiar problems of word-division and punctuation, or of avoiding linguistic sequences which are clear as he says them but ambiguous as he writes them. . . . For such students the remedy is . . . to recognize that in their situations the problem of fit between speech and writing, never a simple matter for any speaker of English, has special complications," according to McDavid.[33]

The teacher's inclination to sneer at substandard structures as "crude" and "barbarous" may be lessened by a reminder that many similar structures exist in languages which have been media for great literature. Leonard Bloomfield notes that "Latin and Russian omit the copula: Beatus ille, happy is he; Ivan durak, John is a fool;" and that French uses the redundant pronoun in such structures as "Jean, quand est-il venu?"—"Jean, when is he come?"[34] Russian also usually omits the article, while French, Spanish and other languages have the double negative.

Writing on the view of grammatical meaning taken by the pioneering linguistic anthropologist Franz Boas, Roman Jakobson points out that "a paucity of obligatory aspects does not by any means imply obscurity of speech. When necessary, clarity can be obtained by adding explanatory words."[35] Standard English is not undignified because its structure—unlike that of Russian and the Romance languages, for instance—does not require that gender must be shown in saying, for example, "I met a friend." By the same token, Negro English is not beneath contempt because of its lack of obligatory tense in verbs; the same phenomenon is exhibited by Chinese and Burmese.

Finally, a study of dialectology may be in itself richly rewarding for the teacher. "A familiarity with the principles and findings of dialectology may yield an enriched understanding of the complex cultural heritage we Americans all enjoy, may demonstrate in dramatic fashion that one may be different without being inferior, and thus lead--from simple curiosity through a more sophisticated understanding of language--to a deeper appreciation of the complexity and potentiality of this interesting animal called man, for whom language is the most peculiar attribute," McDavid says.[36]

While the nation's educators wrestle as they have never wrestled before with the problems of Negro dialect, it is worth a smile to look back at James A. Harrison, who in 1892 urged the American Dialect Society to do research on the dialect "before it is obliterated by the advancing school-ma'am."[37]

The advancing school-ma'am has done remarkably little to obliterate the Negro dialect, or any other substandard form, from the face of the earth in the intervening seventy-five years: a fact that puzzles many. "Why is it," asks William Labov, "that young people, who are exposed to the Standard English of their teachers for ten or twelve years, still cannot use this form of speech no matter how badly they need it? Why is it, Negro parents ask, that young Negro people who are raised in the North, of northern parents, speak like southerners?"[38]

Young white people have a similar attachment for non-standard forms. Albert R. Kitzhaber, in the course of research at Dartmouth College, found that "Sophomores made almost as many errors in their writing after a year and a half of college as freshmen do at the beginning of English I and more than freshmen make at the end of English I. Seniors are worse than sophomores, having made more errors in their papers than freshmen do at the beginning of English I."[39]

The free use of non-standard forms in grammar, spelling, and punctuation in Masters' theses in all disciplines is a matter for sore concern on the part of a major dean at one of Louisiana's state colleges; he adds ruefully that he wishes he himself had been taught to write well. Grammar studies in the schools seem to have availed little or not at all.

In England there is a remarkably similar state of affairs; Whitehead refers to a series of studies by the British National Association of Teachers of English "which indicate that learning grammar has no beneficial effect on children's written work."[40] According to the _Encyclopedia of Educational Research_, American investigators have found that grammar study does not provide mental discipline, does not increase facility in writing, does not help the students understand literature, does not aid in learning a foreign language, and does not change language usage.[41] "The old item-correcting exercises were particularly fruitless in the face of established systematic habits," McDavid says; and "the notion of changing a whole system of speech and eradicating the old habits would run up against the cruel facts that the intentions of the English teachers would seldom be reinforced by the practices of other teachers, let alone the environment of the playground and the home."[42]

To put it plainly, the grammar-teaching practices which seemed to work adequately so long as most of the children attending high schools and colleges were of the middle class (and hence native speakers of the standard dialect), or those with a strong motivation to become members of that class, are not effective now. The reason is not simple. Part of it is that the schools are bursting with children of all classes. In the colleges and universities, some are from very poor families, and for these students higher education has been made possible usually by the government; some are sent by their parents and are themselves indifferent; some are merely avoiding the draft. Only in the first of these groups is there apt to be strong motivation, but such students often have heavy initial handicaps not easily reduced when their classes and leisure hours are abundantly supplied with other non-standard users of the language. There is also the fact that with our exploding technology, the whole nature of American education has changed; the liberal arts, instead of pervading every discipline, are firmly ensconced in a back seat.

It is encouraging that teachers are learning to avoid the old approach. San-su Lin, of the English Department at Southern University, mentions the fact that the substandard usages characteristic in the Negro dialect are really not numerous, a fact that makes grammar drills tempting as a solution to the problem; but this will not work, she says: if for no other reason, because "parrot-like repetitions and audiolingual drills day in and day out are hardly the kind of things they expect from college." She goes on to call attention to one of the stumbling-blocks which must be taken into account in designing new procedures for inculcating standard English:

> Furthermore, how do we know that the student actually hears the difference between his dialect and Standard English? The

> answer to this question may sound unconvincing at first, but the truth is that a human being does not hear or see every sound or sight in the outside world. His senses are highly selective and he hears and sees only what is meaningful to him. If the grammatical concepts of noun plural and verb tense do not exist in a student's dialect, it is not likely that he is aware of the sound segments that signify these concepts. According to our experience, a student simply did not see the s and ed endings printed in black and white when he was asked to read aloud a paragraph in the textbook, and, after several months of practice with a tape recorder, we often found him conscientiously repeating "Johnny begin to read" when the model voice clearly said "Johnny begins to read." To plead with him to listen carefully was useless. Many instructors had done that and still complained of the inability of college students to follow simple instructions.[43]

The student may have a markedly negative reaction to the kind of item-correction that is endemic in many English classes, Stewart says. "Unless they are put within a general framework of systematic comparison, corrections by the teacher of isolated bits of linguistic behavior are liable to be regarded by the nonstandard speaker as capricious or arbitrary. At best, he may interpret this as evidence of hostility on the part of the teacher," he warns. "At worst, he may become uncertain about his language, and serious manifestations of disfluency (such as stammering or unwillingness to speak) may result."[44]

If the approach to the problem via conventional grammar study is unprofitable, what does literature have to offer?

> I think that the purely linguistic side in the teaching of [modern languages] seems in the way to get more than its fitting share. I insist only that in our College courses this should be a separate study, and that, good as it is in itself, it should, in the scheme of general instruction, be restrained to its own function as the guide to something better. And the something better is Literature. The blossoms of language hav certainly as much value as its roots, for if the roots secre food and thereby transmit life to the plant, yet the joyous consummation of that life is in the blossoms, which alone the seeds that distribute and renew it in other growths.

The speaker was James Russell Lowell, president of the Modern Language Association, which he was addressing; the year was 1889.[45] His dictum has been taken seriously by the academic community for over three-quarters of a century. It is Raven McDavid who turns the coin over and shows us its modern side:

> Perhaps the most important block in the way of fully understanding the proper position of linguistics is that the teaching of language in our compartmentalized university curricula is almost exclusively done by departments of literature--English, Romance, Germanic, Slavic and the like. English grammar is taught as a tool to enable the student to write acceptable literary essays; French or German or Russian grammar, as a tool to prepare the student for reading Les Miserables or Faust or Anna Karenina. These ends are not unworthy in themselves, but the emphasis upon them in our academic system prevents students from realizing that the command of a language is necessary not only for facile reading and fluent conversation but for the understanding of the culture in which the language is spoken.[46]

It is interesting to note that there are many colleges and universities which include few, if any, linguistics courses in their English curricula; this is Lowellism with a vengeance, when the blossoms have no roots at all! But some English departments seem slow to waken to the fact that there are college students now who do not care if they never read Anna Karenina, in Russian or in translation, and who will probably never read this book, nor any of the other great classics of fiction. These are not stupid students; numbers of them have great facility in reading in the literature of mathematics, biology, physics and the like on such a sophisticated level that it would make their English teachers' heads swim. To be sure, we have a need--almost a desperate need--for them to be familiar with the core of the liberal arts and with the best that has been thought on the great themes of life and death, good and evil, fate and free will, love and hate: with these things that are at the very center of the experience of all men, no matter how far apart they are in their fields of professional interest. Leaving aside the great books of religion, it is in imaginative literature that these issues are most nearly approached. But though we may lead the student to this water of life, we cannot interest him in drinking it unless we have a respect for and some understanding of his own prospective discipline and of the great literature of that discipline. Departments of literature need to broaden their scope if they are to reach the modern student.

Another regrettable phenomenon in literature classes is a tendency actually to avoid those many opportunities for the teaching of grammar which occur in connection with the study of belles lettres. The reasons are explained by Gleason:

> When classics are annotated, vocabulary receives the lion's share. Grammar, by comparison, is neglected. Seldom a topic of discussion in literature classes, it is equally seldom the subject of annotations. The concentration on prescriptive rules has made the application of grammar to accepted literary pieces both embarrassing and presumptuous and has hidden any possible relevance of grammar instruction to reading. Reference grammars having a role comparable to that of dictionaries are unheard of.
>
> Yet grammatical problems are present in all the literary pieces commonly read in the schools, and acute in some. Writers are no less likely to use a construction unfamiliar to a high school student than they are to use a word he will not know. Other things being equal, the strange construction is more of a problem, since we do not have the same flexibility in grammar as in vocabulary.[47]

It seems to be hard for the average instructor in literature to acknowledge to his classes that Jane Austen said "ain't"; that Conrad used "he don't"; that Faulkner wrote sentences like Chinese boxes; that on almost any page of a great work will be found some departure from the standard. Instead of pretending that he does not notice, he might at least say: "Ah, but they were great--not standard!" But if he is perceptive, he can do better than this; literature is studded with phenomena which illustrate the many ways in which the language can be used, and is used, and which create occasions for explaining the underlying rationale of this flexibility and diversity.

Where else may the instructor look for effective means? Two rumblings on the academic horizon disturb the English teacher of today. One is the still rather quiet thunder of the New Grammar, which--as did the New Mathematics of a few years ago--threatens to send everyone back to school: supervisors, teachers, parents, textbook writers, everyone. The other is what many think of as the new permissiveness, which some regard with the same uneasiness they bring to minimal art and the mini skirt. Indeed, it appears to be a sort of mini grammar; but to the leading linguists of the day, it is simply an effort to get grammar back on the right track whence it departed in the 1700's.

One 18th-century writer who had an unclouded view of the situation was John Locke, who, in his Essay on Human Understanding, wrote: "Whatever be the consequences of any man's using words differently, either from their general meaning or the particular sense of the person to whom he addresses them, this is certain, their signification, in his use of them, is limited to his ideas, and they can be signs of nothing else." Sterling Andrus Leonard quotes Locke in his book The Doctrine of Correctness in English Usage, 1700-1800 and goes on to say:

> Locke, followed by Berkeley and Hume, is sharply contrasted with the usual conceptions of language in the eighteenth century. Locke presented with special clarity the idea that language is an affair of compact or convention; that it has no inherently necessary form or any correspondence with reality; that words and forms can mean nothing whatever but what they are actually understood to mean; in short, that usage is the sole arbiter and norm. Hence, he continued, the only safety in discussion is a common understanding as to meaning and an intelligible agreement as to forms. Here was material to demolish completely all view of what words "ought to mean" or what any form or construction "ought to be."[48]

The grammarians somehow managed to convince many of the English-speaking people that there is something immutable about the "rules" of grammar, just as there is something immutable about the rules of mathematics. But the fact is that while two plus two does not on occasion equal five, and cannot be made to equal five; and that while the sum of the angles of a triangle is 180°, and cannot be changed to 230° or to 61° to suit the fancy of the populace; the grammatical "rule" that a third person singular subject takes an inflected form of the verb in the present tense, may be changed on human whim to an equally valid rule that a third person singular subject takes an uninflected form of the verb in the present tense. In other words, the poker players may start playing bourre any time.

The "rules" of grammar, then, are conventions; they are manners. In India at one time it was the custom of a widow to burn herself alive on the funeral pyre of her husband; American widows in the not remote past wore black for a full year (as Spanish widows still do) and were not allowed to wear diamonds while in heavy mourning, though pearls were permitted after six months. To be sure, there are some who still observe these customs, but they are as archaic as the use of "thee" and "thou." The "best" grammatical usage is codified after a fashion in handbooks of grammar, and helpful they are, indeed; but the best usage is no more fixed than the "best" etiquette as codified in the also-helpful works of Emily Post or Amy Vanderbilt, and both kinds of works have a way of being out of date before they are off the press. Good usage can be reliably ascertained only by a continuous process of observation; and when that usage changes, the grammar books have no more success in calling "halt" than had King Canute in giving his instructions to the sea.

The message for the teacher is not to try to impose a standard from a rule book which is not reflected in the standard of cultivated members of the community in which the student lives. "If a student makes a 'mistake' which does no more than offend against one of his teacher's favorite 'rules,' the 'mistake' is not a serious one in itself, and the wise teacher would not mark it so," R. A. Close advises. "The safest rule one can offer to students of English is this: Follow the facts of accepted usage, and face the fact that pre-ordained and ready-made rules for English grammatical usage just do not exist. What we think of as rules are sometimes nothing but taboos passed on by one generation of pedagogues to another."[49]

The same observation applies to speech. "We must avoid thinking that there is some one region where the 'best' English is spoken, and particularly that that region is the one in which we ourselves live. We must not think that the English of London or Oxford, or Boston or Philadelphia, is the norm by which all other speech must be judged, and that in whatever respects other speech differs from this norm it is inferior. Good English is the usage--sometimes the divided usage--of cultivated people in that part of the English-speaking world in which one happens to be," says Albert Baugh in his History of the English Language.[50] The "new permissiveness," in sum, is merely a recognition of the fact that usage, not a rule book, always has established the forms of the language, and always will. Instead of relying wholly on written grammars, the pedagogues will do well to keep their eyes and ears open and recognize the facts of linguistic life.

As for the New Grammar, the more serious scholars in the field feel that it is not yet ready for use in the classroom because of the somewhat fluid state of its vocabulary and the fact that there is disagreement among the transformational generative grammarians as to various other details. However, the alert classroom teacher (and most classroom teachers are both devoted and alert) is always ready to seize on any new teaching device which seems to have possibilities, and transformational generative grammar, with its equation-like formulae so congenial to today's science-minded young people, is such a device. It is interesting to note in this connection that the December, 1967, issue of The Instructor has very attractive articles by two authors giving transformational methods for teaching children in the primary grades.

Another avenue with considerable promise for helping the student who is seriously handicapped by a substandard dialect is that of teaching standard English as a foreign language. The idea is reasonably venerable, though it has been in the public eye only in quite recent years. Charles Fries suggested it as early as 1927;[51] Thomas A. Knott advised it in 1934, when he said "Substandard students are not 'making mistakes.' They are simply talking or writing in their own language."[52]

Recently there have been qualms as to the precise nomenclature that should be used for the suggested procedure. Marckwardt calls for a term that is "accurate and at the same time nonpejorative."[53] McDavid points out that the important thing is simply the use of the successful techniques developed for teaching foreign languages.[54] Haugen reminds that a foundation must be laid before these techniques can be meaningfully applied. "The linguist's task," he says, "will be that of making a realistic description of the two dialects, of establishing a differential analysis of their systematic deviation in sound, grammar, and lexicon; of these, the grammar is the hardest and the most important."[55]

Of all the many procedures that can be used in the classroom, perhaps the most practical starting point for the Negro student who needs help in increasing his fluency in the standard dialect is through a writing approach. Basic to this thought is the fact that the written language, as implied in the first chapter, is itself a sort of "foreign" language, in that it is a different language. It is easily so presented to the student. Nelson Francis says:

> If the standards of written English which his teacher is attempting to instruct [the student] in are presented as another dialect--the common dialect of educated persons who write--he will be able to see that it is possible for him to master that dialect and thus become a member of the guild of the educated without eradicating the other dialects in which he conducts the affairs of his everyday life. Above all, he can be trained in standard written English without being made ashamed or self-conscious about his native speech. . . .[56]

Bloomfield has said that "When the art of writing becomes well-established in a community, not only the spellings of words, but even lexical and grammatical forms become conventional for written records. In this way, a literary dialect may become established and obligatory for written records, regardless of the writer's actual dialect."[57]

Standard written English, then, can be taught to the Negro student as his second language because it is a second language to everyone; and this can be done without elaborate preparations and without ill-thought-out tampering with his spoken dialect.

Like every skill, expressing oneself in writing is best acquired through practice. One very simple method for increasing writing practice for the student without buryingthe instructor in a storm of papers has been described by Edgar Madden, chairman of the Department of English at Northwood Institute. The crux of Madden's approach--actually devised to increase student involvement and participation--is that during lectures, when a question is asked by the instructor, he then asks the whole class to write the answer. Several students are called upon to read what they have written; all have had the writing experience, all have the opportunity to compare their own written work with that of others. In comments by the instructor on the answers that are read aloud, emphasis is on the quality of the expression of the idea, not on the structural quality of the writing. Madden says that a student will often observe on his own that the idea might have been expressed more clearly by using a different structure.[58]

This is a method that can be put into practice in any classroom, from third grade to college and in between. It is something that any teacher--in any discipline--can undertake, if he has an interest in doing so. It requires no apparatus other than an abundant supply of paper for the children, and this, sorry to relate, is not always possible in the poorer areas. The procedure can only help the student in all his work by constantly expanding his ability to put his thoughts into words; and it is aimed right at the heart of the Negro student's greatest difficulty in the formerly all-white Southern college, where it is his written work, rather than his speech, that in so many cases lowers his marks.

It has been said that "the problems of teaching language, in order of their importance, are (a) having something to say; (b) having a valid reason for saying it; and (c) having the skill with which to say it." Current educational research demonstrates that "language instruction is best accomplished if a student is constantly placed in situations where he needs to communicate with others through writing or speaking," and that "children coming from a program rich in writing experiences with a minimum of grammatical drill succeeded better in college than did students who had had much grammar and little writing."[59] The Madden method is particularly promising because it starts by giving the student something to say and a valid reason for saying it. But whatever method is used, a writing approach to the grammatical problems of any substandard student is most apt to be effective, and a thought approach is essential. The teaching of rules of grammar should be incidental to teaching the student how to write clear, simple, meaningful prose.

In addition to constant and meaningful practice in writing, the student needs, as Francis has said, confidence in his knowledge of his native tongue, which is actually extensive.[60] Most vitally of all, he needs motivation; this has been emphasized by Carl G. F. Franzen[61] and Charles Carpenter Fries,[62] among many others. Success in learning another dialect depends not only on the will to succeed, but, according to Einar Haugen, on a liking and admiration for the speakers of that dialect.

It is Haugen's that is perhaps the hardest challenge of all. It is encouraging to be able to say that the English faculty at Northwestern State College has accepted the Negro student with courtesy, good will, and a full sense of the responsibility entailed and the challenges to be met.

CHAPTER IV

A CHALLENGE AND AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NORTHWESTERN STATE COLLEGE

With the increasing influx of colored students into formerly all-white schools, the problems of the English teacher multiply, for many of these students have a dialect which is substantially different from that used by the majority of the white students. The nature of this difference is a matter for research in every individual region, almost in every community.

In the South, as in other areas where there are large Negro populations—for example, in the islands of the Caribbean—the Negro creole languages, whether Negro English, Negro Spanish, or Negro French, have in common certain characteristics which cannot be wholly attributed to cultural isolation or to a paucity of education.

Scholars differ as to the source of these characteristics, many having ignored the work of Lorenzo Dow Turner on the African languages and the Gullah creole, and the work of such men as anthropologist Douglas Taylor on the creole languages of the West Indies.

Turner found that the Gullah language has certain structural similarities to the languages of West Africa, whence most of the slaves were brought to this country. In order to test whether these structural characteristics are also to be found in the Negro English of Natchitoches Parish, 355 papers written by colored junior and senior students in Parish high schools were analyzed; another 355 papers written by white junior and senior students in Parish high schools were used as controls.

Results obtained in this study seem to indicate that there is a definite African substructure in the local Negro dialect. This substructure is both masked and reinforced by three similar influences at work upon the language: (1) the influence of survivals of archaic forms from 17th-century and earlier English; (2) the simplifications of the pidgin English which was the first English dialect learned by the slaves; and (3) the normal simplifications of the language which are to be found in any folk speech.

The study shows that ninety-five percent of the Negro students are affected by these factors, as compared to fifty-eight percent of the white students. A small study of papers written in a community where no Negroes have ever lived indicates that Negro English may have had a perceptible effect on the structure of the dialect used by white people where there are large Negro populations. Studies by Turner, Pardoe and others also suggest that the typical Southern phonology has been influenced by the phonology of the African peoples. A familiarity with the history of the English language indicates that some of these simpler forms used by the Negro students may ultimately be adopted into the standard dialect.

In the meanwhile it is essential for the schools to give these students mastery of the standard dialect, not only to enable them to compete in the classroom and in the labor market, but also for the sake of the nation, already experiencing a severe shortage of skilled workers.

If the schools are to cope with this problem, it is obvious not only that a great deal of research must be done, but also that many new attitudes and understandings must be acquired. One is that communication in the classroom between Negroes and whites will at best be difficult after such a long period in which the two races have lived as neighbors but in different worlds. Another is that Negro English is not an inefficient medium of communication, but rather the reverse; in some ways it is more efficient than standard English. A third is that the use of Negro English or any other substandard dialect tells nothing about the intelligence or the moral calibre of the speaker, though it may tell of those years of poverty of which it is often one symptom. While on the national front the poverty is being attacked, it is the work of the schools to attack the symptom.

The Negro who now uses Negro English needs to be at least bidialectal to take his place as a responsible citizen of our complex civilization. However, there are certain dangers and difficulties in attempting to tamper with his language. For one thing, it is the language of his own society, and it is important to him to remain a part of that society. For another, such attempts are often viewed by the male student as a potential undermining of his masculinity; there are indications that English at the high school level would be more effectively taught by men. While the literature on the subject mentions only the desirability of this situation for the male studen it is submitted that this would also work better with girls as well since a girl is usually more eager to please a man than to please a member of her own sex.

Very little has been accomplished in the school room in the last century to eliminate Negro English or any other substandard dialect. In the face of this unpalatable fact, it is obvious that new approaches must be made. This study points to eight steps which might be taken toward the improvement of English teaching in the schools.

1. Teachers must be aware of the linguistic learning process: that the student's basic grasp of his language, which is on almost an instinctual level, is learned outside the classroom from his parents and his peers, and principally from the latter. The fundamentals are acquired before he enters school.

2. Negro English and other dialects must be recognized and respected. A critical, scornful, or moralistic attitude on the part of the instructor serves only to stiffen the student's resistance to change. It is difference, not superiority or inferiority, that must be emphasized. Some teachers may need to recognize the fact that, often subconsciously, they themselves at times use substandard forms in casual speech; and that the degree of their linguistic snobbery is apt to be simply a reflection of their own middle class origin and "precarious" social status. The Negro student will find dialect switching especially difficult, partly because of that instinctual pressure mentioned above, and partly because of the similarity between Negro English and standard English. A comparative study of the structure of other languages reveals, however, that there is nothing "crude" or "barbarous" about the African structures which are still found in Negro English. Any dialect, moreover, is worthy of study.

3. The traditional grammar approach must be abandoned as ineffective. Teaching must be in terms of systems, not items. Item corrections and grammatical drills are particularly futile, and to the student may seem baffling or inimical, or may even be crippling. Instructors must be aware that the student with a large dialectal handicap often does not see or hear differences between his own dialect and the standard forms: that such differences may be screened out. This at times happens to the instructors themselves.

4. Where dialect problems are great, the Departments of English must expand their offerings in linguistic studies. Also, curricula in literature must be revised to stress materials more germane to the interests of the modern student. Readings in the classic literature of other disciplines would be to the point, as would courses in the literature of the Negro. The rich opportunities for grammar teaching presented by literature, now often actually avoided because of the embarrassing tendency of the greatest authors blithely to ignore the commandments of the prescriptive grammarians, should be seized upon.

5. Instead of shying away from what they think of as "the new permissiveness," teaching staffs should scuttle their sometimes archaic approach to grammar and recognize the criterion of usage. Usage always has controlled and always will control the developmeht of the language and determine what is actually "correct" and what is "incorrect" at any given time and under any given circumstance~~s~~. The question~~s~~ is one of manners, not morals; of customs, not of natural laws.

6. The work of the transformational generative grammarians appears to hold promise as an especially useful device for teaching students to become bidialectal, partly because it gives effective and scientific means of describing separate language systems. These means are particularly congenial to today's science-minded young people. Courses in linguistics which introduce the work of the transformationalists should be made available to all present and prospective teachers of English. (It should be remarked here that such a course is available at Northwestern State College, and that the library has extensive collections on linguistics in general and on the teaching of English as a second language. Materials on dialectology and on teaching English to the disadvantaged could profitably be supplemented.)

7. The successful methods developed in teaching English as a foreign language should be used in teaching standard English as a second dialect.

8. Since writing is a second language for everyone, a writing approach has special relevance as an immediate expedient in helping the Negro student. The Madden method is one among many possibilities along these lines and has the advantages of being inexpensive, easy to use, and applicable at any level and in any discipline.

Whatever methods are used must rely on a thought approach. The student must be given skill in saying something meaningful, not in saying nothing "correctly." The goal of any program must be teaching students to express ideas which are significant to them in clear, simple, effective prose.

Three psychological factors are involved. First, the student must be given confidence in his knowledge of his language, which is actually extensive. Second, he must be strongly motivated to acquire standard English, or any efforts along those lines will be fruitless. Third, liking and admiration for those who use the standard dialect are among the best sources of such motivation.

Northwestern State College has an opportunity to lead the way in this field, possibly through augmenting the Northwest Louisiana Supplementary Education Center, which at present is working with the public schools in thirty parishes in the fields of mathematics, science, conservation, and outdoor recreation. The development of a Language Arts Center under the aegis of the Center is one of the possibilities. Studies to be undertaken by such a branch should include area-by-area research in dialects; comparisons of written forms with speech forms of both white and colored students; investigations of the background of Negro students who have the standard dialect, with a view to determining how this was achieved; correlations of the kind of writing done by Negro students with the amount and kind of instruction; and comparisons of white dialects in areas where there are no Negroes with white dialects in areas with large colored populations. Institutes for teachers of English at all levels would be indicated. The Center should also develop instructional materials for the colleges and universities in the area, as well as for the elementary and high schools.

Finally, it is suggested that the Negro English teachers now preparing to seek the Master's degree be encouraged to work in linguistics.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I

[1] Walter Ledet, Registrar of Northwestern State College; telephone conversation, December 12, 1967.

[2] Mrs. Lavinia McNeely, State Supervisor of English and the Language Arts; letter, November 9, 1967.

[3] Joe Gray Taylor, *Negro Slavery in Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, 1963), p. 3.

[4] *Acts of Louisiana 1829-30-31-32* (Donaldsonville, 1830), p. 96.

[5] Charles Barthelemy Rousseve, *The Negro in Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1937), p. 42.

[6] Rousseve, p. 127.

[7] C. C. Graham, Superintendent of Natchitoches Parish Schools; telephone conversation, December 11, 1967.

[8] Estimated from figures in *Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930: Population, III, part 1*, Leon E. Truesdell, ed. (Washington, 1932), 982.

[9] W. T. Couch, "The Negro," in *Culture in the South* (New Orleans, 1937), p. 459.

[10] C. C. Graham.

[11] C. C. Graham

[12] Jim L. Knotts, Director of Adult Education, Louisiana State Department of Education, "State Education Department Launches Attack on Illiteracy," *The Boardman*, official journal of the Louisiana State School Board Association, XX, No. 1 (September 1965), 1.

[13] *County and City Data Book, 1967*, Edwin D. Goldfield, ed. (Washington, 1967), p. 161.

[14] Dr. Charles Thomas, Dean of Administration, Northwestern State College; telephone conversation, December 12, 1967.

[15] C. C. Graham.

[16] Office of J. E. Stewart, Parish Welfare Director; telephone conversation, December 12, 1967.

[17] County and City Data Book, 1967, pp. 152, 153.

[18] For 1940 figures, see City and County Data Book, 1949, Morris B. Ullman, ed. (Washington, 1950), p. 169. For 1950 figures, see City and County Data Book, 1952, Morris B. Ullman, ed. (Washington, 1953), p. 211. For 1960 figures, see City and County Data Book, 1967, pp. 152 and 153.

[19] "The Language Behavior of Negroes and Whites," Pacific Sociological Review, IV (Fall 1961), 72. The underscoring has been added for emphasis.

[20] "Negro English," Anglia, VII (1884), 232-279.

[21] "The Speech of Negroes in Colonial America," Journal of Negro History, XXIV (July, 1939), 247.

[22] "The English of the Negro," American Speech, II (June, 1924), 190-191.

[23] The Relation of the Alabama-Georgia Dialect to the Provincial Dialects of Great Britain (Baton Rouge), p. 64.

[24] Orbis, IX (January, 1960), 10.

[25] Unpub. diss. (Louisiana State University), p. vi. Raven McDavid, now Director of the Atlas, says that contributions are now being elicited from Negro informants in Maryland, North and South Carolina, and New England, though the resources of the Atlas are not adequate for complete parallels of Negro and white informants. Also, a Louisiana Negro scholar, Melvin Butler, is working on a dissertation on Negro speech in Louisiana at the University of Michigan, using older Negro informants.

[26] Ann Arbor, 1949, p. 6.

[27] Melvin Butler, University of Michigan; letter, November 22, 1967.

[28] "Southern American Dialect," American Speech, VII (April 1933), 43.

[29] "Social History of the Negro," A Handbook of Social Psychology, C. A. Murchison, ed., (Worcester, Mass., 1935), p. 257.

[30] "A Historical and Phonetic Study of Negro Dialect," unpublished dissertation (1937).

[31] Pardoe, pp. 1, 248, 249. The underscoring has been added for emphasis.

[32] New York, p. 280.

[33] New York, p. 189.

[34] Chicago, 1949

[35] *American Speech*, XXVI (February 1951), 3-17.

[36] "New Languages for Old in the West Indies," *Comparative Studies in Social History*, III, No. 3 (1961), 277-278. The underscoring has been added for emphasis. See also Taylor's "The Origin of West African Creole Languages: Evidence from Grammatical Categories," *American Anthropologist*, LXV, No. 4 (August 1963), 800-814.

[37] Ithaca, N.Y., p. 15.

[38] New York, p. 45.

[39] *English Syntax*, *Teacher's Guide* edition (New York, 1964), Teacher's Guide section, p. 12.

[40] H. A. Gleason, Jr., *Linguistics and English Grammar* (New York, 1965), p. 83. This book will be referred to in subsequent notes simply as *Linguistics*.

[41] *The Structure of American English* (New York, 1958), p. 36.

[42] *Teacher's Guide*, p. 16.

[43] *Linguistics*, p. 171. Those who have not ventured into the thickets of the New Grammar might want to know that the word "prosody," which once usually signified the technique of verse writing, is now being used to express those aspects of language which include proxemics (distance), attitude, and the suprasegmentals in general.

[44] "Spoken and Written Expression: An Experimental Analysis," *Journal of Abstract and Social Psychology*, LVIII, No. 6 (1964), 640-647, abstracted in *Psychological Abstracts*, XXXIX (February 1965), 180.

[45] "The Neglected Situation," in *The Ethnography of Communication* John J. Gumperz and Dell Hymes, eds., *American Anthropologist*, LXVI, No. 6, part 2, special publication (December 1964), 136.

[46] H. L. Mencken, *The American Language*, Raven I. McDavid, Jr., ed., (New York, 1963) n., p. 478.

[47] *Linguistics*, p. 369

[48] "The Factor of Purpose in Grammar Teaching," *English Lang Teaching: English as a Foreign or Second Language*, XXI, No. 1 (Oc 1966), 44.

CHAPTER II

[1] See Taylor, "New Languages for Old in the West Indies," in which he quotes early French missionaries as saying they made such structural adjustments, and gives significant examples. It is also highly significant that Charles A. Ferguson of the Center for Applied Linguistics defines "pidgin" as "A hybrid language which combines the lexical stock of one language with the grammatical structure of another language or group of languages." This definition appears in his paper, "National Sociolinguistic Profile Formulas," in *Sociolinguistics*, William Bright, ed. (The Hague, 1966), p. 311. This valuable source, comprising the proceedings of the UCLA Sociolinguistics Conference held in 1964, was received from the library of the University of California at Los Angeles too late to be generally included in this study.

[2] *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect*, Chapters IV and V, pp. 209-231.

[3] *Pidgin and Creole Languages*, p. xii.

[4] *Pidgin and Creole Languages*, p. xii.

[5] *The Doctrine of Correctness in English Usage 1700-1800* (New York, 1962), p. 236.

[6] Quoted in *American Life in Literature*, Jay Hubbell, ed., (New York, 1936), p. 297.

[7] "The English of the Negro," p. 192.

[8] "Old, Early and Elizabethan English in the Southern Mountains," *Dialect Notes*, IV, Part 4 (1916), 284-293.

[9] "Southern Mountain Dialect," unpublished.

[10] New York, 1958, pp. 147, 148.

[11] Raven McDavid, "Historical, Regional and Social Variation," *Journal of English Linguistics*, I (March 1967), 35.

CHAPTER III

[1] Henry Lewis Mencken, *The American Language*, 4th ed. (New York, 1936), p. 345; Mencken attributes the classification to Sterling Andrus Leonard and H. Y. Moffett.

[2] "Dialect Areas, Settlement Areas and Culture Areas in the U.S.," *The Cultural Approach to History*, Caroline F. Ware, ed., (New York, 1940), p. 334.

[3] "Sense and Nonsense about American Dialects," LXXXI, No. 2 (May 1966), 10.

[4] *The Structure of American English*, p. 45.

[5] "Taxonomic Structure and the Pursuit of Meaning," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, XXI, No. 3 (1965), 267.

[6] *Linguistics*," NEA Journal, LIV, No. 1 (January 1965), 53.

[7] *Linguistics*, p. 371.

[8] "Review of the Conference," *Social Dialects and Language Learning*, Roger Shuy, ed., Proceedings of the Bloomington, Indiana, Conference, 1964 (Champaign, Ill., 1964), p. 156. This booklet will subsequently be referred to only as *Social Dialects*.

[9] "Dialect Geography and Social Science Problems," *Social Forces*, XXV (December 1946), 169.

[10] "On the Language of Lower Class Children," *School Review*, LXVI, No. 4 (Winter, 1959), 436.

[11] "Verbal Comprehension and Communication in Negro and White Children," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, LI, No. 2 (April, 1960), 47.

[12] "Future Research: Implications growing out of the Wilmington Study," *Social Dialects*, p. 137.

[13] "American Social Dialects," *College English*, XXVI, No. 4 (January, 1965), 260.

[14] Quoted by Clyde Kluckhohn in "Notes on Some Anthropological Aspects of Communication," *American Anthropologist*, LXIII, No. 5, Part 1 (October, 1961), 899.

[15] "Correctness, Rules and Explanations," *English Language Teaching*, XVIII, No. 2 (January, 1964), 54.

[16] Ithaca, N.Y., 1950, p. 236. In paperback, Anchor Books (Garden City, N. Y., 1960).

[17] Quoted in *American Life in Literature*, p. 477.

[18] In *Encounter with the Future* (New York, 1965), pp. 13-37.

[19] "Verbal Destitution: the Pivotal Barrier to Learning," *Journal of Negro Education*, XXIX, No. 4 (Fall, 1960), 499.

[20] "Stages in the Acquisition of Standard English," *Social Dialects*, p. 94.

[21] "Bilingualism and Bidialectism," *Social Dialects*, p. 126.

[22] "Language Understanding Could Be Hereditary," *Science News Letter*, December 1, 1962, p. 352.

[23] "Foreign Language Teaching Methods in Quasi-Foreign Language Situations," *Language Information Series*, II, Center for Applied Linguistics (1964), 1.

[24] "Stages in the Acquisition of Standard English," pp. 91-92.

[25] *Editor's Choice—You Couldn't Do Woise*, reprinted from the *APME Red Book* (1963) by G. C. Merriam Co. (Springfield, Mass.), p. 4.

[26] "Foreign Language Teaching Methods," pp. 13-14.

[27] "Stages," p. 98.

[28] *The Disappearing Dais* (London, 1966), p. 208.

[29] "The Twenty Billion Dollar Misunderstanding," *Social Dialects*, p. 73.

[30] "Stages," p. 94. The underscoring has been added for emphasis.

[31] "Bilingualism," p. 125.

[32] *Linguistics*, pp. 82, 349, 373.

[33] "Dialectology and the Classroom Teacher," *College English*, XXIV, No. 2 (November, 1961), 115-15

[34] *Language* (New York, 1933), pp. 172, 186.

[35] "Boas' View of Grammatical Meaning," *American Anthropologist*, LXI, Memoir No. 89, Supplement (October, 1959), 140.

[36] "Dialectology and the Classroom Teacher," p. 116.

[37] "Negro English," *Modern Language Notes*, VII, No. 2 (February, 1892), 123.

[38] "Stages," p. 78.

[39] *Themes, Theory and Therapy: the Teaching of Writing in College* (New York, 1963), p. 109.

[40] *The Disappearing Dais*, p. 222.

[41] Chester W. Harris, ed., third edition (New York, 1960), p. 461.

[42] "American Social Dialects," p. 257.

[43] "Pattern Practice in a Freshman English Program," *Social Dialects*, pp. 57, 58.

[44] "Urban Negro Speech: Sociolinguistic Factors Affecting English Teaching," *Social Dialects*, p. 18.

[45] *PMLA*, V (1890), 21.

[46] "Dialect Geography and Social Science Problems," *Social Forces*, XXV, No. 2 (December, 1946), 168.

[47] *Linguistics*, p. 477.

[48] p. 23.

[49] "Correctness, Rules and Explanations," p. 55.

[50] Second edition (New York, 1963), p. 403.

[51] *The Teaching of the English Language* (New York, 1927), p. 144.

[52] Quoted in *The American Language*, fourth edition, p. 344.

[53] "Review," p. 152.

[54] "Social Dialects: Cause or Symptom of Social Maladjustment," *Social Dialects*, p. 9.

[55] "Bilingualism," p. 125.

[56] *The Structure of American English*, p. 567. The underscoring has been added for emphasis.

[57] *Language*, p. 291. The underscoring has been added for emphasis.

[58] "The Participation Lecture," *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, IV, No. 1 (October, 1967), 26.

[59] *Encyclopedia of Education Research*, p. 462.

[60] *The Structure of American English*, p. 567.

[61] Quoted in *The American Language*, fourth edition, p. 347.

[62] *The Teaching of the English Language*, pp. 146, 151, 152.

[63] "Bilingualism," p. 125.

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APPENDIX

It might be noted here that several groups of papers written by the colored students and at least one group of papers written by white students gave evidence of having been rewritten and "corrected." This was thought not to affect the results of the study, but rather to enhance it, since the structural variations sought for appeared about as often in these papers as in the others. This emphasizes what has been stated in the preceding pages to the effect that it is very hard for a person with an instinctive structure to notice, even under pressure, that it is not the standard.

The following examples are given in the categories used in the tables. The numbers at the left of each example are the numbers of the individual papers.

NOUNS

1. Uninflected: singular for plural

E30: My parent and I live on X street along with my three sister
E37: I take trips, work, go place
E40: I like so[me] of my teacher
F15: I have 5 brother and 2 sister
F22: My mother and father are the parent of nine children
F36: One of my brother attends school
H11: During the summer month
H39: The way thing are going
I 1: a citizen of the United State
I10: I apply for all the job that I can

2. Overinflected

G23: I am a seniors at X school
G34: Where peoples can really learn
G35: take up a subjects
I10: a percents of it
A29: My mother names is
B26: My father is with the KCS railroads
C 4: I am a juniors in school
F 3: My plans is to go to colleg
H31: Before I was 1 years old [a very common use.]

3. Uninflected genitive

E32: My father name is
F14: go to my friend house
G15: a grown woman place
H11: wearing each other clothes
H14: I don't want to work in any white people house
H21: My father occupation
A31: My mother is a teacher aide
C11: She is a nurse aide
C36: My sister wedding
C37: He deliveries envelopes to some of Houston important companies

Other overinflected forms included (H14 and others) the plural "childrens" and (H37 and others) "the second graded."

ADJECTIVES

F 4: The lessons were much easy [i.e., easier]
F 5: It is the most durtyes look shool in Natchitoches [dirtiest looking]
F 6: I want to set me up and intelligence night club
F26: my olds brother [oldest]
F37: I have four honeysome brothers
F38: I was left hand
G 8: the badest part of my life
G15: It was very enjoying
G24: My mother is the most wonderfulist mother in the world
G34: I like to go to differents states
G35: My brothers are interesting in us
H27: more nicer
H34: He is very boss and fussie
I10: Father is decease
I11: nine years olds

Notice that in many of these instances, as stated in the body of the paper, the difficulty is with participial adjectives. Also notice (G34, I11) the tendency to overinflect.

ADVERBS

E34: Sometime I have a small job
F 8: In class I would practice to read and write sometime
F14: I always did want to fly every since I was a boy
F25: Every since I was small
G34: learn all I possible can
H21: I usual sit around the house
H25: and live happy

PRONOUNS

F 9: Some of the thing what I don't like are
F29: I'm gaining the many things which will aid my in my future life
F40: I have two sisters which are older [Most common with both races]
G30: Them are very nice
G34: enjoy theirselves
H 1: a brother and sister which
H 7: a man what I think I will be happy with
H12: They have they up and downs
H37: My mother he

ARTICLES: omission of the indefinite article

F33: sitting through long, boring lecture
F38: settling down with husband
H31: I was very short little baby
H38: It is very large school
H40: My parents lived on farm
D24: to become welder
E17: My grandmother is typical sort of grandmother
E35: I want to work at hospital
B12: He has friendly personality
F 5: He always didn't like bath

VERBS

1. Overinflected: use of third singular form for first singular or for plural. (There would be no occasion in an autobiography to use this form with singular "you")

F 7: I attends high school
F34: I loves to go to school
G22: They also tries to help someone when they needs help
G33: They is so nice
H 1: I plans to attend college
H14: I doesn't know
H32: My three brothers doesn't live at home
H35: My plans is
I 1: I gose on a vacation
A 4: I really gets a kick out of it

2. Uninflected

a: with third person singular

E36: It also have rule and regulation
F 2: Everybody in my family adore him a lost. [the spelling "lost"for "lots" is very common among both white and colored students and is doubtless related to the problem with consonant clusters.]
F 6: He's married and have four children
F24: My oldest sister have eleven children
F26: My mother do houses work
G 3: My daddy work out of town mostly
G38: Where my mother live and work
H31: One of them stay sick
B 9: He do a little farmering
B11: This end my story

b: for past tense

F 2: My oldest sister finish school this year
F15: In the summer I had no vacation, I just work and went to the pool
G28: My mother die when I was two year old
H 7: She attend school last year
H14: He stop school in the 7th grade
H26: You would learn a lot if you study
H29: I begin school here in first grade
H37: It offer me a chance
I10: Mother stop working and every sent then she haven't work at all
I11: A lot of things that happen long times ago

3. Overinflected: use of simple past or past participle for uninflected forms

G38: When I finished school I plan
A26: I like to fish, it is something I really enjoyed doing
C 5: Doing the summers I go to Houston Texas and spent about 3 or 4 weeks
D31: My father sang good, he sings church songs
E 3: She let me play with her pens and scrambled all over her papers
E27: I also learn different things, met different people, and go to various surroundings
B24: I know how to met people
B25: I want to became a nurse
F34: I like to met new people
G32: I did had a lot of fun
G34: Everything I asked for she be willing to give

4. Other Verb Problems, Tense and Number

E35: I were born in Alexandria
F37: It are very nice
E33: Most of the time me and my little sister be clean the house for our mother
F 1: On the three months we be out of school
C37: I was borned in a house
C 8: Two of my sisters finish school [i.e., have finished]
G16: From the time I begun school
E28: As far as my parents are concern
E31: Both are now live together happy
E38: I am plan to go out of town
F23: I was born here and live here all my life
I 2: They arguing and quarrelling [i.e., They argue and quarrel]

[Most of these involve inappropriate use of the uninflected form]

5. Other Verb Problems

E31: We do not have enough teacher to teacher all the children
F21: Father went to the fifth grade and drope out to work [Addition of a terminal "e" to the uninflected form is common.]
F26: I have two brothers marriage
F28: I weight 120 pound [Very frequent.]
F29: He and my mother devorse
F34: I like to reads novels
G 7: They founded the money
G18: I'am in the 12th grade [Very frequent.]
G34: I like to watch TV and list to the radio
G35: I went to visited some of my people
H18: I was borned in Natchitoches
H26: When I don't be working
E35: I were born in Alexandria
F37: It are very nice
H31: Get a job been a doctor [i.e., being]
I 3: I attained high school
I 4: a brother who shall soon reach the age of 18
I 8: I song in the choir

6. Omission of the copula

F 4: When I grown
F 5: My brother fat and tall
F26: He next to me
G 2: There only my brother and me
F 5: It nothing I don't like to do
F18: My name [John Doe]
H 2: I born to Mr. and Mrs.
H38: I born in Natchitoches
F26: Both of them in the ninth grade
G15: My sister going to Northwestern
G35: When I get grow I planning
H36: My brothers are students at the University and suppose to finish
H25: The reason I don't like to because
G15: Courting not that much to me
G28: X and X is the only to sister [two sisters] I have that not married

FUNCTION WORDS

F 7: A good solid chance toward life
F13: I was born in July 17
F24: My mother had to help in the farm
F24: I was united in the Greenville Baptist Church
F30: My mother and father are of the greatest people
F37: I think all the teachers to X school are very nice
G 5: I know all the teachers that teach to our school
G 8: I work to a barbecue pit
G18: I want to be an coach
G23: I love to attend to sports activities

G26: She works at in a private home
G35: I was born in March 31
B24: I am a junior of X school
Cws11: They both are students of Northwestern State College
Cws13: I go to a camp throughout the state of Louisiana
B37: I were born in a hot summer day
F 6: He's working over to Howard Lumber Co.
I 2: I would rather attend another school, in which I tried to do [Very frequent.]
I11: Then, maybe, I'll have a two childrens
I21: I live at Route One
G16: I have a totle of 6 brothers and seven sisters for the exception to the two died a brother and sister
G17: I go to school to Central High
C17: I got used of it
C33: She also went to farther schooling
E 4: so happy that day until I was cry
E 7: My father and mother married in the year for 1938
B11: I write on my spare time

OMISSIONS

A 3: I would like to work the summer
A 7: Most of all [what] I like to do is
A 8: Most of the time when are working
A18: When I'm grown I like to get married [Most frequently.]
A20: argue with someone something . . . make the most of consists of
A37: I want be a welder
A38: I most of all to work on cars
A40: I don't understand [them] and they don't understand me
B 1: I would like very to live in California . . . get away from for awhile . . . five brothers seven sisters . . . serving in the that is going Viet Nam . . . a few of them one away . . . rest of them is home
B 6: I dislike for people accuse me
B12: I don't like to be around who don't want to be around me
B13: all of my years being here
B14: until I was third grade
B15: My mother name is XXX and is 40 years old
B18: during the summer [I] get a job
B32: [I] like people who like me
B31: The first [thing, book, story] I read was
C 1: I want be a teacher
C10: I want work for my living
C13: My sister lives in California and two children [i.e., has two children]
C26: I was bone in Louisiana in 1949 and been there every sceen I been bone and steel. [i.e., "still am;" the student put "is," then crossed it out.]
D 6: She is a year and seven months [old]. [Very frequent.]

IDIOM

E38: She is very nice and free heart
F 5: After that I will like to do my own drawing for myself and sale them
F11: What I like to do most of all is play sports
F28: I am now the age of 17
F37: I plan to go to trade school and take up nurse
F39: My future career in the medicine
G11: I like arranging furnish
H11: When I finish college I will like to have a job
H20: While being over there [i.e., in Houston]
H28: Father is the laundrist
D28: It is the best school in the surround. [This has a Cajun sound.]
E 5: After I have serviced my time I will like to take a trade
D 1: My mother, who teachers school
C36: My sister before
C21: I was discharged from the hospital for good, unless something would happen
C25: Over the summer I had a pleasure to visit a cousin in Dallas
C 7: My mother is a housekeeping
B 9: My father do a little farmer
B14: I hope by the time I am 22 I could have made my parents proud of me
A30: He will be get out on October 30. . . . I am gone to come back if I don't be two old. . . . service my time in the Air Froce

Excerpt from paper written by white student in hill community with no Negro residents:

> I have got an older brother; he is two years older than I am. I have got a little brother that is 7 and a little sister 9 years old. When Lonnie and I was kids we us [i.e., used] to fight all the time. But we done a lot of things together. My little sister and brother are about the same way as Lonnie and I was.
>
> I go to [name of school]. I guess it is a pertty good school. But one thing I don't like about it is the High School building it acts like it is about to fall down. But all the rest of the building are almost brand new. There is another thing about our school it does not have enough subjects that you can take if you wanted to.

Excerpt from paper written by colored student:

> In our family we fortunate to have five girls and six boys, a total of eleven in all. We live a Christian life, meaning we go to church on the Sunday and take an active part in the service. But most of the family had move far away, but when they left we all sort miss them. They comes back on Christmas and spent Christmas with us. When Christmas get here we, ours get together have a great time together.

> When I finished high school I would like to take up welding or some form of business. I plan to go to a trade school when I fihished, unfortunate I wouldn't attend College. But some day I would like to owns my on business and a nice place to live. I been going to [name of school] every sent [i.e., ever since] I was six years old and I'm planning on finished here too.

It will be observed that while most of the non-standard verb uses in the white student's paper can be categorized under the same headings as those typical of Negro English, they are actually dissimilar in flavor, as it were. Notice also that the colored student, who is obviously conscious of inflection, tends to over-inflect: e.g., "totals," "owns," etc.